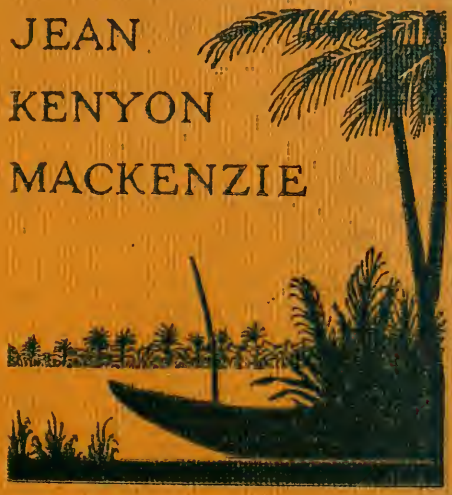
AFRICAN ADVENTURERS

JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE



3 s c

Woodbury Missionary Society.

First Baptist Church

of Burbank.

AFRICAN ADVENTURERS

JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE

LIVINGSTONE AND ANNIE MARY

Annie Mary was Livingstone's youngest daughter. This picture was taken in 1865 just before he left England for his last journey to Africa.

AFRICAN ADVENTURERS

BY

JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE
AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," AND "AN AFRICAN TRAIL"

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

AFRICAN ADVENTURERS. I

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I DEDICATE

THIS LITTLE STORY TO

THE CHILDREN OF AFRICAN MISSIONARIES

I hope these young people will like to read about the black boys and girls and their adventures on the trails of the great forests and in the little rough school houses that are built in the clearings. I hope they will be pleased with the story of Livingstone told—as I have tried to tell it—from the lips of a young African lad, speaking to the chiefs of his tribe about the great white adventurer.

I invite my readers to follow me on the trail of this little book into the forest where I will show them many strange, true things—both new and old.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author gratefully acknowledges her appreciation to the Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions for their arrangement with George H. Doran Company for the re-issue of "African Adventurers" in a Library Edition, with the hope that this new Edition will reach an ever increasing circle of readers.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER I: THE FAMILY OF AKULU MEJO

AFRICAN ADVENTURERS

CHAPTER I: THE FAMILY OF AKULU MEJO

THE little brown mother of Mejo sat by the door of her hut waiting for him to come home. On the fire that was laid on the clay floor of the hut a big clay pot gurgled. Mejo's dinner was in this kettle, well tucked in under some wide banana leaves. Presently, when she saw the body of her son enter the clearing, Mejo's mother lifted the kettle from the fire; with quick movements of her hardy hands she took off the layers of green leaves that covered the kettle, and Mejo's dinner steamed in the little hut. There were two courses for dinner—there was a mess of greens and there were ears of corn. The greens and the corn were there together in the kettle.

Mejo's mother found a wooden bowl on the floor and a wooden ladle thrust by its handle into

the bamboo slattings of the wall; she blew on the bowl and the spoon to dust them, then she filled the little bowl with hot greens. But for the ears of corn she made a little platter of a green leaf.

Mejo was no more than thirteen years old but he had to duck to enter the hut, for the walls were low. Inside he could stand upright for the ridge of the roof was all of ten feet from the ground. Mejo sat upon his heels before his little dinner and his mother sat opposite him on a little stool hewn from a block of wood. They ate with little wooden spoons from the wooden bowl. But before they ate at all they bowed their heads and said:

"Akeva, Zambe!" That is to say—"Thanks to God!"

"They say we live in Africa," said Mejo, when he had been a little time silent and busy with greens and corn.

"Who says so?" asked his mother.

"The teacher says so," said Mejo.

"What kind of a teacher says so—is it the white man or one of the black people?"

"Even if it were a black teacher—and it was, it was Ela from Asok—will you doubt it? He

heard it from the white man. And when he doubted it and he knocked on the white man's door at night to ask him of this thing; the white man said, 'Surely, yes.' The white man showed Ela in a book a word that says that the black people live in Africa."

"Was it a book in the Bulu speech or a book in the German speech?"

"It certainly was a book in the German speech."

"Was it a word from God?" asked Mejo's mother—"did Ela read in God's Word that we live in Africa?"

"No, I cannot say that that book was one of the words of God. It was just a white man's book."

"Well, then," said Mejo's mother, "I don't believe it. I who have lived in this forest always, did I ever hear that we live in Africa? What the old and wise of the tribe never knew, how can the white man know it—who is a stranger of yesterday? If you ask me where we live I will still tell you that we live in the country of the Bulu tribes! It is just pride that is in all this teaching that Ela teaches you. He lies to you about the words he

reads in the white man's book! He knows that you are still ignorant and he does not fear to lie!"

"You are certainly a person of doubts. I believe him. I believe him because all the things I doubted one day I saw them to be true the next day. When he taught me the little marks that are letters he told me always that those letters if you knew how to join them, would be created words. I always said in my heart,—words are made in the mouth, they are never made in the eye. Then one day I saw a joining of letters make a word—Eké—strange thing! Even as he said. Now I am able to believe him."

"You believe too much," said Mejo's mother. "You just better believe all the words that are the words of God; that will be enough for you to believe. You were certainly very late on the path tonight. I thought the sun would be lost before you came. I asked my heart,—that son of mine, where is he? Does he not have wisdom enough to fear the things of the dark? Where did you linger?"

"I visited my traps," said Mejo, "those little traps I set on the day that is Saturday when we do not have school. I set some bird traps over

SCHOOL BOYS AT PLAY

Wrestling is a favorite sport among the Forest tribes.

THE VILLAGE OF EFA

This is where the boys taught school.

by the great rock in the direction where the sun rises."

"Did you kill anything?"

"How can you ask me that when you and I eat just nothing at all but greens and corn! I feel such a meat-hunger that I could eat a rat. Though I am too big to eat rats now!"

"Don't hang your heart up," said Mejo's mother—"if you kill nothing tomorrow, myself, I will cook you some good food. All day when I work in the garden I will watch for a snail or caterpillars and if when the sun is in the middle I have found nothing, I will come back from the the garden in time to kill you a few little fishes."

It was growing dark now in the little hut, except where the light of the fire lay low between the fire stones.

"It is the sixth hour now," said Mejo.

"What is that new word you say?" asked his mother.

"I said, it is the sixth hour. Because they told us in school today that when the sun is lost then it is the sixth hour of the night. When it rises that hour is the sixth hour of the morning."

"And when it is the middle?"

"Then it is the twelfth hour. And when the women begin to come from their gardens it is then the second hour after noon."

"How do they know all that? Who said that this is one hour and another hour? What is an hour?"

"The clock tells them. You saw the clock when you went to see the white man's baby. All these questions you ask me are so many questions. Did any hen lay an egg today?"

"A hen certainly did—and there are now six eggs in the corner by my bed."

"Ah, mother—give me those six eggs!"

"I am to give you those six eggs? And a little chicken in every egg! What new thing do you have in your heart that you should beg all my six eggs and all those six little chickens from me? You are not so hungry that you must eat an egg, are you?"

"Never could I bear to eat an egg—but I want to buy a writing stone (a slate). My old one is broken. You know that I must work for many mornings on the mission farm to buy another writing stone. And those six eggs are half the price of the stone. I hate to rise from my bed

when the women rise to go to their farms; then the dew is everywhere and I hate to work among the weeds with my body all wet with dew. So I said in my heart, I believe my mother will give me some eggs, and so with some eggs one day and some another I can buy my writing stone."

"How soft are the bodies of boys that they cannot bear the chill of the morning. Have not the mothers of men risen always—all these generations of men—and suffered the dew on their bodies and the chill that is in the dawn, that men might eat good food from the garden! But just ask a boy to rise early and to walk in the wet grasses—then he has a sullen face. No—I must keep my eggs for my own debts. You know as well as I do that I will be wanting a gift for God on the day that is Sunday when the people of God bring every one a gift to God. And three of us who are people of God in this town have tied ourselves to buy medicine for old Vunga who lies on her bed in her hut."

Now it was dark in Mejo's mother's house. There was no moon that night, the oil palm trees in the middle of the clearing were lost in the dark. Across the street of the town other little huts of

other wives of Mejo's father were lost too, except where firelight shone through the slits in the bark walls, or through the doors that were still open.

"I will go and salute my father," said Mejo.

"You school boys never know the news of the town," said Mejo's mother. "I might run away or a tree in falling might fall on me, and you would come in at the day's end to ask,—'Why does not my mother show me my evening meal?' Now everyone but you knows that your father is not in town."

"Where then is he?"

"He has gone to Mekok. A carrier with a load of rubber for the trader at the beach passed on the path this morning. He said that six days ago when he passed the town of Mekok he asked a drink of water from a woman in that town. In that woman's house was a little girl who begged him to take a packet of peanuts to her mother as he would be passing her mother's town."

"'I am Asala,' she told that carrier, 'the daughter of Akulu Mejo. I am the sister of Mejo Akulu. I am married in the town of Mekok since the last rainy season. My mother is a little thin woman, one of the wives of Akulu

Mejo. She is a person of God. She is easy to find—everyone knows her. Perhaps you too have a little daughter sold into a far marriage. So I beg you to take these peanuts to my mother. Tell her that Bilo'o, my husband's wife in whose house I live, has permitted me to take these peanuts from her garden. Because I have no other present to send my mother. Tell my mother that I think of her always from the dawn of one day to the dawn of another day. Tell her that a man who passed on the path two moons back gave me this news,—that at the time of the planting of peanuts my mother was sick. When I heard that news my heart dried up and I could not eat. Then I begged God for my mother. Tell my mother now I am thin with grief and longing!"

"All this news of your little sister the man with the load of rubber told me, and I cooked him some plantains and he ate. But while those plantains were on the fire I went to the palaver house where your father sat talking to a guest—and because my heart was heavy in me I did not fear to speak before the guest. I said to your father, 'How many times have we planted peanuts since

you bought me from my father in his town that is on the path that comes from the sun's rising?'

"Your father just looked at me,—it would be a long hunting that would remember all those planting of peanuts that we have planted since that day he bought me for a big ivory, and I was then a girl no bigger than your wrist.

"Then I asked him another question. 'How many times before I became a person of God did I run away from this marriage that you and I are married?'

"Your father hunted to remember those runnings away that I ran. On his fingers he counted six runnings. And he said, 'Yes—Six runnings you ran away. As long as your mother lived you would run away to her. And after she died you ran away for other reasons. You were certainly a bad runner away!'

" 'I hear! and since I am a person of the tribe of God—how many runnings away have I run?'

" 'Why, none at all,' said your father. 'Do women who are persons of that tribe run away?'

" 'I tell you a true word,' I said to your father, 'My heart has run away today to my little daughter who is married in Mekok. She sends a mes-

sage for me. I must see that child. I beg you to let me visit her.'

"Then your father said No—*he* would visit her. He said that one of the goats that Asala's husband had given on the dowry had died. So he must go to beg of Asala's husband another goat. He would say to Asala's husband,—'Now the girl I gave you did not die, did she? Or I would have given you another of my daughters in her place. But the goat you gave me has died. So you must give me another goat.'

"Then your father called some of his young men for a journey. Together they went away at noon. As for me, I have just sat in my house all day and desired with a great desire to see my little daughter. Now I am going to lie down upon my bed. Before we part teach me the new word of the Word of God that you learned in school today."

" 'The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.' Now repeat," said Mejo.

" 'The Son of man,' he that was Jesus," said Mejo's mother, "came to seek the people lost in the forest and to save them."

"You have caught the argument, but you have

put too many words in it, try again," and Mejo set the model again. But Mejo's mother always said, "lost in the forest."

"Even so," said she, "you see that the Word of God says nothing about Africa; it does not say that we were lost in Africa—that country that you tell about. And I know that we were lost in the forest, so it is hard not to put those words into the word!"

"If you were in school," said Mejo, "they wouldn't let you do it, so *I* won't." And he persisted until his mother said his verse correctly.

"I am going to bed now," said he.

He took a brand from the fire and went out into the street. He waved the brand about to keep the burning end of it bright. This he did to drive away any snake that might be abroad in the dark. By this dim and ruddy light, Mejo came to a little house where he lived with Assam, his half brother, one of the older sons of Akulu Mejo. The mother of Assam was dead.

The boys had built this little house for themselves. Together they had cut and trimmed the young sapling trees that were the frame work. They themselves had peeled from great trees the

big plates of bark that were the walls. Their father had given them the mats of palm-leaves that were the thatch of the roof, and some "real men" of the village had helped them bring in and raise the long straight sapling that was the ridge pole. That day they had all sung the song of the roof tree. Many little brothers had helped them thatch their roof, singing the song of the thatch. Now they lived together under this roof with the dignity of school boys.

Assam was perhaps sixteen years old, perhaps seventeen. He had three loin cloths all his own, and two singlets.[1] He had a felt hat, but his father often borrowed this and wore it on long journeys. He owned a Book of the Word of God in the Bulu language. He owned a lantern—the only lantern in that town. He could write in a beautiful, clear hand. He was very much admired by his father, and by the people of the village. For nick-name and drum name the villagers gave him a name that they beat upon the call drum when they summoned him from a distance too great for the call of the human voice. This phrase is that name they gave him—

[1] Really an undervest, much worn as an upper garment.

"He stands like a dagger."

This was a phrase of admiration because Assam was a fine youth, straight and slim.

"Strange thing about Assam," the villagers said, "he is not proud." And for this they approved him and admired him the more.

On this night of which I tell you, when Mejo came into their little house, Assam was studying his lessons by the light of the lantern that stood on a little table of bamboo—the boys had built a table in their house.

"Assam," said Mejo.

"Say it!" said Assam, not looking up from his book.

"It is a question," said Mejo.

"Ask it," said Assam—

"Today did they speak in your class about the things of teaching?"

"They did," said Assam. "They said vacation was near, and it would be well to see the company of boys who were willing to teach in the villages during vacation. They said that many villages far away were calling for teachers. Mr. Krug said all the boys who were people of God

and who were willing to go on those journeys and teach in those schools must rise from their seats."

"Did you rise from your seat?"

"I did," said Assam.

"What boy goes with you?"

"How do I know what boy goes with me? Mr. Krug said he would ask the younger boys,—'Who is willing to walk in the company of a teacher, to be his companion in a strange town, to cook his food, and to help teach the classes?' He said he would ask the younger boys that question, and I thought perhaps you would promise to go with me. Did he ask?"

"He certainly asked," said Mejo.

"Did you promise?"

"I did not," said Mejo. Then after a while he said, "I was afraid. I thought—just two boys in a strange town—how do we know what thing the people of that town will do to us? They promise to feed us, but will they feed us? All this rainy season I have just sat in school. Now the dry season is here I long to fish and hunt. I long to camp in the forest with our own people when they visit the dwarfs. I don't want to teach school in vacation. I want to stay at home."

"Don't you think I want to stay at home too?" said Assam.

"Well, then, why don't you?"

"Oh! go to sleep!" said Assam. "Some things you understand, but God has not yet opened the eyes of your heart!" And Assam put out the lantern.

Soon two school boys were asleep on the bamboo bed. Assam owned a red blanket, together they slept under that blanket. But in none of the other houses in that town was there a blanket. Fires burned beside all the other bamboo beds, and now and again through the night there woke beside the fires that burned low a sleepy black man or woman who mended the fire and slept again.

How quiet the night was in that little village where there were no lamps; where no more than twenty thus were ranged in two rows with a clearing between them like a street. At either end of this little street there was a palaver house where the "real men" of the village lived. And about this village, all built of the bark of trees and thatched with the leaves of trees, stood the trees of the forest, dripping with night dews. Some-

times in the forest a bird would call. Sometimes a bigger animal would make a crashing in the bush. There were wild cows in the forests of that neighborhood, and leopards and elephants and gorillas. Often at night a leopard would steal a sheep of that village, and often in the dead of night bands of monkeys would chatter and play in the trees behind the little brown huts, or in the moonlight that fell upon the deserted street.

One day perhaps a week later, Andungo, the mother of Mejo, was coming home from her garden with her basket on her back and a great bunch of plantains in the basket. The little forest path was brown under her brown feet, the great trunks of the trees were gray about her brown body, and above her were the millions and millions of green leaves making up and up to the roof of the forest. On that roof bright birds sunned themselves, and there were the flowers of such trees as bloomed. On the roof of the forest the sun shone, but down where Andungo walked there was a kind of gray green dusk—you see, it was the cellar of the forest.

Andungo, Mejo's mother, was studying her

lessons as she walked alone. She was saying to herself:

"This must be the second hour, because Mejo said it is the second hour when women begin to return from their gardens. This must be the day that is Tuesday, because Tuesday is the day that is two days after Sunday—and twice have I slept on my bed since Sunday. Hé! the great day that was Sunday! I heard the school boys say that there were seven thousand people under the roof of the church on Sunday. That thing that is a thousand is too much for me to know,—women cannot know these things—but with my eyes I saw that great company; I heard that great shouting they made before we began to worship God, and I heard too that great silence when we began to worship God. That was a silence like the silence that is the ceasing of a great rain upon the roof—when you are astonished at that silence. And I heard those many voices singing the praise of God. I wish I knew all the words of that song that says:

'God is loving,
He has loved me,
God is loving,
He loves me.

I tell you again,
God is loving,
God is loving,
He loves me.'

"More of that song I wish I knew.

"I am glad I found those nuts of the wild mango tree that Mejo loves to eat. I will roast them in the fire and Mejo shall eat them all."

But Mejo never so much as saw those mango nuts with his eye, because when Andungo the mother of Mejo ducked down to enter her hut, two little brown arms were thrown about her body—a little young body clung to hers. That was the body of her girl Asala. Her girl Asala was crying out,—

"Ah, mother, I have come! Ah, mother, they have permitted me to visit you! Ah, mother, the many nights I lay upon my bed and longed for my mother! Sometimes when I slept you entered my head at night. That dream was so quick to pass. Now I see you with my eyes; I touch you with my hands! Tell me all the news!"

That is why Mejo never saw the mango nuts—his little sister ate them while she answered her mother's many questions.

"That is a new way they dress your hair now," said Andungo.

"Yes—it is the dressing that they dress the hair of girls in the town of my marriage," said Asala.

She was perhaps twelve years old; she wore a little apron of green leaves and this was attached to a belt of leopard's skin. She wore besides a bushy little tail of dried grasses. About her neck was a necklace of dog's teeth strung on one of the strong black hairs of an elephant's tail. Just below the knee of her right leg she had tied a narrow ribbon of a bright green grass and another such a green ribbon was tied about her forehead. These bands of green were very pretty on her brown body. Her feet and hands were dainty. This little brown girl was like the small gazelles that run in the forests. When her mother looked at her she thought—"How beautiful she is!"

"Do they say that you are beautiful in the town of your marriage?"

"They say I would be beautiful if I were tattooed," said Asala. " 'Why did not your father have you tattooed?' they ask. 'You look so strange without any marks upon your body.'

ALASA

Her nose ring is made of blue beads.

THE HUNTER'S CAMP

The missionaries often go out into the jungle to hunt antelopes and small game for food.

THE WHITE MAN'S CARAVAN

The forests of Africa are so tangled that it is sometimes impossible to find a trail, and the easiest way is to go down the bed of a stream.

Then I feel shame in my heart. All the others are tattooed. Sometimes I make a paint of charcoal and the gum of a tree, and with that I make marks upon my body—but not very well. I am too stupid to make good marks."

"You should tell them the truth," said her mother. "Say that you are the child of a Christian woman who knows that God made your body as it pleased Him to make it, and that it is forbidden to spoil that body He made with knives and the things of tattoo. You should tell them that."

"Oh! I do tell them that you are a Christian," said Asala, "I tell them that more than anything. All the wives of my husband speak to me of that thing—that my mother is a Christian. Women come from across the river to ask me questions of my mother that is a Christian. The women of our neighborhood are always asking me,—'how do the people of the tribe of God do this thing and that thing? Tell us about the rules of the tribe of God. Tell us about that Jesus, Son of God.' Those questions they are always asking me."

"I hope you are wise to answer."

"I answer as I am able," said Asala. "Some questions it is hard to answer. Now that wife of my husband in whose house I live begins to pray."

"Thanks to God," cried Andungo, "now she will be good to you!"

"I tell you a true word," said Asala, "she was always good to me. Yes, from the very first day that I went a stranger into that town, walking before my husband with my hands clasped upon my head and tears running from my eyes—from that day she was good to me. She tells me always that I am like a child of her own. She never had a child but me!"

"When *I* came to my marriage it was not so," said Andungo. "Your father put me in the house of Eda; she is dead now. She had a bad heart, that woman, and I too, I had a bad heart. Under that roof that covered two bad hearts what quarrels we made! She was big and I was little—she always won! But the thing you tell me of that woman in whose house you live is a good word. I will send her a present when you go back and as many of the words of God as I can teach you. How is it that your husband permitted you to leave his town?"

"It was because of you, mother. Because of the news my father gave my husband of you.

" 'Asala's mother is a Christian, a member of that new tribe that is growing in the forest'—my father told my husband, and that a Christian must keep her word, and that you would drive me back to my husband's town because you were a Christian.

" 'You can trust that word,' said my father.

" 'Strange thing!' said my husband.

" 'Those women of mine who are Christians do not run away,' said my father.

" 'Strange thing!' said my husband.

"Then he said to me,—'If I permit you to visit your mother for one moon do you swear by the dead that you will return?'

"Then I said to my husband,—'Not by the dead do I swear; but by the living God.'

" 'Is that a good oath?' asked my husband, and my father said that it was a strong promise.

"Then my husband said, 'If I let you go I do not let you go free. I tie you with this tying [1]—that when this moon that is making is lost and the morning after the making of the next moon, you

[1] To be tied is to be bound to do a certain thing.

must leave your father's town; your father will show you the path back to my town. And when you return you must have a word from the white man. It would be well to have that word written in a book, for I see that all the white people make their strong words in a book. And the word I want is a promise. That white man must send us a teacher. He must promise to send us a teacher. All the news I hear of these things that are the things of God make my heart desire them. I sit in my palaver house in ignorance. Tell the white man that Efa, the headman of Mekok, would learn of the things of God. Do you promise to tell to the white man this word?'

" 'I promise,' I said to my husband. So he let me come. Ah, mother, such joy in my heart! It fills my heart full.—Where are all the girls?"

"They are fishing, and there on the wall is your own little net."

Asala's little net was of a knotted cord strung to a hoop of twigs. She hung the circle of it on her shoulder and went away in the great sunlight. She knew the old path to the river. When she came to the river bank she saw all the girls of the village playing in the brown water. There

were the little girl-wives of her father, and the girls born in the town and not married yet. They ran up the bank to greet her, all wet with bright water.

"Asala has come home!" they cried. "How she has grown and her hair is dressed a new way! Ah, Asala, did you run away from your marriage that we see you with our eyes again? Ah, Asala, here is a new girl that you do not know—she is from the neighborhood of your husband's town—she asks news of her mother, of her brother. Ah, Asala, tonight when we dance you will teach us new dances that you learned in that far country!"

It was four weeks later that Andungo, the mother of Mejo, said to her husband:

"Some days run too fast. Some days are as slow as a chameleon and some run like gazelles. Now there are only two days before Asala must go back to her husband's town."

The parents of Mejo were sitting in the big palaver house at the end of the street. Akulu, the father of Mejo, was busy making a box of the bark of a tree. He was making this box very carefully, sewing it together with a rattan thread. When it was done he meant to put some precious

bones in the box—bones that were fetish. He hoped that when he made a charm with these bones certain desirable things would come to pass. He had a good many worries about his town, and about some evil spirits that were troubling the people of his town, and so he was trying to make a strong new "medicine" against those evil spirits. This is why he was so busy sewing away at his bark box. Andungo had brought him a little cake of mashed plantain and a little peanut paste in a green leaf. They were alone in the palaver house, and she told him how sorry she was because Asala's visit was almost all run away.

"That thing is easy," said Akulu. "Keep her."

"Keep her!" cried out Andungo. "How can I keep her? She gave the promise of a Christian that she would return!"

"You Christians are hard-hearted," said Akulu,—"to drive a child away like that."

"Am I driving her? Not I! It is herself. Last night, when we saw the new moon and all the children in the village cried out,

" 'The new moon is made!

" 'The new moon is made!'

"Then Asala came away from the other girls where they were dancing. She sat by me in the hut. In the dark I could hear her cry. And she said, 'Ah, mother, when we see the new moon two nights then in the morning I must rise and go to my husband's town. Because that was the time I promised. And I am a Christian.' "

"Such a little Christian," said Akulu. "Surely they will never believe the word of such a little Christian! They will say,—her heart is the heart of a child, and she lingers by her mother's side. There can be no harm in that!"

"Little or big," said Andungo, "she is all the Christian the people of that town know. And she must show them the path. They all take example by her. She must go."

"But if I say that I am not ready to go with her? Here I am these days, trying to make a new medicine charm for my son Ze who grows so thin. What if I say that I cannot leave my town now? How will she keep her promise?"

"We thought of that," said Andungo. "Then Assam will go to show her the path."

"But he is in school!"

"Even so, he will beg the teacher to let him go, that the Christians may keep their promises."

"Such persistence!" said Akulu.

The next morning when Mejo sat in school, he saw a woman and a girl come in. "There is my mother and my sister," he thought. He felt surprised and uncomfortable. "Now they will do something stupid," he thought, "and I will feel shame!"

The school house was a great roof thatched with leaves, over rows and rows of seats and desks rough hewn from the logs of the forest. The walls of the schools were of bark—and so low that a boy might sit in his seat and look off into the forest. Under that great roof there was a murmur of many voices, for there were four hundred boys in this school. This was the lower school, the upper school was near by. At the end of the school a white man sat at a table on a platform, and here and there, among the pupils, the pupil-teachers stood before their classes. There were thirty young black boys teaching in that school.

Andungo and Asala came in by the little breach in the wall. Outside the sunlight was too bright and too hot, for it was near noon, but in

the school there was a cool shade. Andungo and Asala felt strange when they stepped into that shadow crowded with the bodies of wise young men and boys. They stood together near the wall and whispered.

"I fear! and I feel shame," said Asala.

"I too," said her mother. "Let us go, they may laugh at us."

"Only the promise that I promised is able to force me," said Asala.

"Come, then, we will do quickly," said her mother, and they went on up to the platform.

"Ah, teacher of men!" said Andungo.

The white man looked up from a great book he was writing.

"I greet you, mother of Mejo," said he.

"This little girl is my daughter; she is in a far marriage and she makes us a visit. She has a word to say to you."

"Such impudence," thought Mejo, who was watching from his seat and feeling shame. He could see a little red feather in Asala's hair and that little feather trembled; his heart softened. "She fears," he thought, and he pitied her.

"It is because of a promise I made my husband

that I have come," said Asala, and her voice trembled like the feather in her hair. "I promised him that I would beg the white man to send a teacher to the village of Mekok. The people of Mekok desire to learn the things of God. They desire to read the book of the words of God."

"Who is the headman of the village of Mekok?"

"My husband is the headman. His name is Efa."

It was very quiet in the school now because all the boys and all the teachers were listening. Asala clung to the edge of the white man's table and he saw her little brown face looking at him over the edge.

"Will the people of Mekok pay the teacher if I send him?"

"My husband says that he knows the custom of paying the teacher, and the people of the town will certainly pay the teacher."

"Will the women of the town feed the teacher every day?"

"Every day they will feed the teacher. He shall not be hungry a single day."

"Will the boys and young men of the town build the school house?"

"They will! Already they are cutting bark for the walls and hunting leaves for the thatch. All these things are understood by my husband as the custom of the tribe of God."

"Are there so few Christians in your husband's town that a little girl must bring this great message?"

"There is no Christian but me. I alone am a Christian in that town."

"Then it is from your mouth that your husband and the women of his town have learned this news of the things of school and of the custom of the tribe of God. I hear."

And the white man took counsel with himself.

"Will not you yourself come to school with us? There is a white woman who cares for girls like you and teaches them the things of women who are women of God. Does not your heart draw you to come and be with her?"

The white man saw tears soften those brilliant eyes.

"To-morrow I return to my husband. I made a promise," said Asala.

"You are a good little girl," said the white man, suddenly, "you must keep your promise.

Tell your husband that I received his great message from your mouth, and that I promise a teacher for the village of Mekok. I will write this word in a book. I am a 'real man' and I will keep my promise. He too is a real man and must keep his promise to pay and to feed and to build. You may go now. As you go—God keep you."

Mejo watched his mother and his sister go away. "She is brave," he thought.

The next morning Asala left for her husband's town. Her father went with her. And that night Mejo said to his brother Assam,—

"I wonder to see Asala so brave."

"It is the power of God," said Assam.

"Will they send a teacher as they promised?"

"They certainly will," said Assam.

"Are you sure? Have they chosen that teacher?"

"They have," said Assam, "and I am that teacher." And he put out the light.

"There go my brother and my sister," thought Mejo as he lay beside his brother in the dark, "together they walk the new path that is the path of God. They certainly have a peculiar courage!" And he sighed.

CHAPTER II: WHITE MEN AND THEIR ADVENTURES

CHAPTER II: WHITE MEN AND THEIR ADVENTURES

IT was a dark night—"the moon was lost," as the forest people say,—and the people of Akulu's village were sitting about the fires in the palaver house. There had been an elephant hunt that day,—Akulu had made a strong medicine for the hunt and yet the elephant had got away.

"That is because all my strong young men are in school," said Akulu, who was in bad humor. "They are followers of the white man—my boys and my men—their old father goes to the hunt unattended. Soon the men of our clan will give me a new nickname, they will call me—

'You walk alone! Where are your brothers?' "

"When they beat my nickname on a drum that is the name they will beat—

'You walk alone! Where are your brothers?' "

The young sons of Akulu sat together in a little group peeling and eating sugar cane. One of the older boys said:

"Some boys took new names to-day. Mr.

Krug told us stories of brave men, and some boys said that they would name themselves for those brave men."

"Were those brave men white men or black men?" asked Akulu.

"They were white men," said Assam.

"What kind of bravery was their bravery?" asked Akulu. "Were they brave hunters or brave fighters? Tell me about that bravery!"

"It was not a bravery of hunting or of fighting, —it was a bravery of walking alone in a strange country among strangers and enemies. They were makers of roads in the forest. In canoes they followed strange rivers. Alone they approached great and angry headmen. Every one of these brave men might say his nickname was—

'You walk alone! Where are your brothers?' "

At this moment, Akulu rose and went out into the dark, where his call drum lay under the eaves of the house. Presently he drummed the call to his neighbors. Akulu was a great drummer; far, far away in the forest the murmur of his drumming was heard by other headmen sitting by their own fires. "That is a call from the town of

Akulu Mejo," they said; and those men whose villages were neighbor to his rose to answer the call from Akulu.

He came back into the palaver house and sat down.

"Go on," said he to Assam, "this talk that you talk is a real word. It is well that other men should hear this talk about brave men. What were they hunting,—these brave white men? Ivory, was it, or rubber? What goods did they carry? Were they traders? Tell us news of them."

"One of them was Ngutu," [1] said Assam.

"Hé yé é!" cried out Akulu. "He was my friend! Yes, I agree that he was brave. That coming that he came to us when I was a young man like one of you—that was a brave coming. Alone he came, as you say. Ten black men of the beach tribes walked in his company. His first appearing was in the town of Abiété. All night and all day of the days that he slept in Abiété the drums of Abiété were busy with the

[1] Ngutu is the native name of Adolphus C. Good, a member of the Presbyterian Mission in West Africa. He opened up the Bulu interior, and died in that country. He is still remembered by the Bulu. His only son, who is now grown, is at work among the tribes of that forest.

news. All those days the people of the forest were running to the town of Abiété to see the white man. Strange word of him we heard. His hair is like a monkey's hair, we heard; his face is not like our faces. He does not dress his hair; he wears a thing on his head that he takes off in the house. Then, when he goes on the path, he puts that thing on his head again. His voice is kind, his manner is kind. You don't see his body at all; it is covered. The thing he has come to do we do not yet know, but he says many words about 'Zambe—He who created us.' But we do not yet know truly of the thing he has come to do. This is the news we heard of him."

Some of Akulu's neighbors were coming in out of the night. They carried reed torches, and these they beat out upon the floor. To them Akulu said:

"You who are 'real men,' do you remember the days of our youth when Ngutu came to our country?"

"We certainly remember."

"It is of those days that we are speaking now. My father was then headman of a town near Abiété. He had many sons—some older than

I—all brave young men. And he had brothers younger than he—all brave men. In those days we all carried guns. Those were good days before there came a white governor to take away our guns. Now a man is only half a man because he has no gun. A young man of my time was of a peculiar beauty—so brave he was!"

"You say a true word, Akulu!" cried out an old man, who warmed his hands at the fire. "In those days we were as beautiful as leopards. The villagers of a strange village trembled when we passed upon the path; they hid themselves in the forest, leaving their houses empty and open."

"How true!" sighed one.

"The good days of the past!" sighed another.

"I long for those days," sighed a third.

"I dream of a gun in a dream that comes into my head at night!"

"Well, it was so, as you say. In your youth we were beautiful and we carried guns. So my father said to us all:—

" 'When the white man passes through our town we will beg him to sleep in our town. And when his carriers have laid their loads upon the ground, we will just steal those loads. That will

be easy. The goods in those loads are all fine goods—beads for our head-dresses, yellow wire to make bracelets, strange cloth that is not made of beaten bark like our cloth, and bundles of wonderful little sticks [1] for making fire. It is his custom to give some little portion of this goods to the men who befriend him—but it will be easy for us to take it all.'

"This was how we took counsel together, and this was our plan.

"The day he came to our town was a day of the dry season. He came in the late afternoon, from the direction of the setting of the sun. Many of our neighbors walked in his company, laughing and talking and making a great noise. He did not laugh or talk. He walked like a man who is worn out. I saw him with great surprise. I called out with the others,—'Hé yé é! His hair is like the hair of a monkey! The strange thing on his head!' I was so surprised to see a white man. He came into the palaver house where my father sat. His carriers put their loads down in the street, they came into the palaver house. He took the thing off his head. He gave my

[1] Matches.

father a greeting, and he gave us all a greeting—like a brother. He spoke our tongue, but in a way to make us laugh. He spoke like the tribes across the Ntem river. You know the way we always laugh at the talk of the tribes across the Ntem?"

"We certainly laugh!" said young and old, and they laughed.

"Well, so we laughed on that day of the past when Ngutu first spoke to us. We all stood up in the palaver house, beautiful with our guns and fierce with the fierceness of strong young men. We said to my father:—

" 'Let us go now to steal the loads—there they are on the ground! His carriers have no guns—it will be easy to steal the loads.'

"Ngutu heard us say this, and the carriers heard. They feared greatly—those carriers. Some rose to run away; but Ngutu said to them, 'Sit down!'

"To my father he said he was weary. This much talking made him very weary. And he said he was thirsty. He begged for a drink of water. My father sent a little girl to the spring. He looked at Ngutu a long time. Ngutu looked

at him. We still spoke of the goods in the load. Ngutu drank the water from the spring. And suddenly my father said:—

"'This white man fears nothing. He must have a strong fetish that protects him. We do not understand white men and their medicine. Let us be wise and treat him with kindness, or evil may come upon us and upon our villages.'

"Then all the young men put their guns down. We were disappointed, but we respected the voice of my father and we respected the bravery of Ngutu. This time that I tell you was my first sight of Ngutu. He was not yet my friend. That night by the light of the palaver house fire he told us first the news of Jesus, the son of Zambe [1]—He who created us. He told us how the son of Zambe redeemed us,—because we were forgetful of Zambe and had broken the great law of Him-who-created-us. That was the first time I ever heard of the tribe of God, that is now so strong in this country. My own sons honor the things of the tribe of God more than the things of the tribe of their fathers."

"Not the young only," said Oton,—a big man

[1] Zambe is the Bulu name for the Creator of men.

who was an elder in the church. "Many 'real men' are Christians and they pray for you every day, Akulu."

"Yes, and we pray for you," said Assam.

"Even so," said Akulu, "I am not a Christian. It is too much trouble to be a Christian. That was always the argument I used to make to Ngutu, when he spoke to me of the tribe of God. Yet I was a friend of Ngutu. My eldest son was born the day after Ngutu was put in his grave on Efulen hill. That was my son Ngutu, who was a Christian when he was a lad, and he died. The Christians made me bury that boy without any of the dances of mourning or the proper charms for the spirits of the dead. They say he sits down in the town of God. Who knows?"

"I know," cried out the mother of the boy Ngutu. "And the path to that town I know."

"Be still!" said Akulu, "there is more news to hear. Assam will tell me news of those brave white men—they that were spoken of in school to-day."

"There were many," said Assam. "There was a great one named Livingstone. Mr. Krug told

us that among all the sons of the white man none exceeds that man for bravery."

"Where does he have his town—that man Livingstone?" asked Akulu.

"He is dead now. He died when Mr. Krug was a baby."

"That would be a long time ago," said Akulu. "What great deed did this man do that he lives so long in the memory of his tribe? Tell me that thing he did. Was he a son of the English?"

"He was a son of the Scotch—and that is a tribe I do not know, but brother to the English."

"Was he a son of a chief?"

"He was not. The people of his father's house worked with their hands—they were weavers of cloth—the cloth of the white man. Himself he made cloth until God called him to do the work of the tribe of God. Then he studied many things in books. He studied medicine."

"It is a strange thing," said Akulu, "how these people of the tribe of God must always be studying in books. Now there is Ze, who is headman in Yefuzók. I saw him with my own eyes sitting with a book on his knees and a school

boy was teaching him the things that are in the book. I said to him:—

" 'Ah, Ze Zom, I feel shame to see a headman learning of a child. You are a headman, like myself.' But he just laughed. He said, 'It is true that you see me with your eyes for a headman, but in the eyes of the Lord Jesus I am a servant. So I humble myself that I may read the law of the tribe of God in a book. Sit down,' Ze said to me, 'until I finish my task.'

"And then I heard him say like a sheep, 'B-a-Ba!' And like a frog he said, 'B-o-Bo!' "

Akulu laughed and everybody laughed.

"About Livingstone," [1] said Assam. "He studied medicine."

"Was he a great doctor in his own town?" asked Akulu, "and a maker of Magic?"

"He was not. The great deeds he did were not done in his own town, but in the country of the black people. This country that the white people call Africa."

"Livingstone!" said Akulu. "Now that is a

[1] Boys and girls of Livingstone's own tribe will want to know more about him than Assam was able to tell the black men in Akulu's palaver house. They will find it in "Livingstone, the Pathfinder," by Basil Mathews.

strange thing. I do not know that name. Did you ever hear in our country of a white man by that name?"

Akulu looked around the palaver house, where the fire lit the faces of his friends.

"I hear that name for the first time to-night," said one and another. "This is a white man's fable that you tell us. We keep in our hearts the names of all the white men we have ever seen!"

"Not a fable," said Assam, "but a thing of distance. All the great deeds of Livingstone and his great walking were beyond the Ntem river and beyond the Congo.

"Stop, boy!" said Oton, the elder. "The Ntem river we know—do not we fight with the tribes beyond that river? But this river you call the Congo—is that a real river?"

"It is a real river. The tribes who live on that river see it every day. It is a great river. Our country of Africa is a great country—more than we black people know. Mr. Krug says so."

"Mr. Krug!" cried out Akulu—"some day Mr. Krug will want to tell me how many wives I have and how many children. Has Mr. Krug

seen all this great country that he can give us so much news?"

"Not himself. He has not seen the country that Livingstone saw; but he has read the book Livingstone wrote—all white men read that book and believe it. In the book are written those things that Livingstone saw on his great walks."

"Was he a great walker?" asked Akulu.

"He was the best. Even Ze Zom, who walks so well, cannot have walked more than Livingstone."

"It is hard to believe that," said Oton—"you know that Ze Zom has this nickname—

" 'If the sun sets I will walk by moonlight—I will walk by moonlight.' Let me tell you about the walks of Ze."

"No," said Akulu,—"this is a night to listen to the walks of Livingstone. Where did those walks begin?"

"They began very far from here on the beach. But not the beach we know. If you stand with the place where the sun rises on your left hand and the place of the setting on your right hand, then the place toward which you turn your face is the South."

"The South! another thing of the white man!"

"Yes. And if you walk many seasons—rainy and dry seasons—then you come to that beach where Livingstone began to walk. That place is called Capetown."

"Show us on the ground the things of that white man's walk."

Assam took some strippings of sugar cane in his hand. One he laid on the ground and said:—

"This is the beach we know at Kribi." Another he laid upon the ground and said. "This is the beach we never knew—where the sun rises."

A third he laid upon the ground and said, "This is Capetown." Then, with the sharp end of a sliver of sugar cane, he drew about these on the clay of the floor, an outline of an ear.

"This that I draw," said he, "is Africa."

"Hé yé é!" cried out his father and their friends. "Let us see this thing with our eyes." And they all rose to see that drawing on the ground. They leaned above it, laughing and slapping their thighs.

"Show us that river," they said, "that is the Congo."

And Assam made the Congo with a strip of

sugar cane. And another great river he placed for them—that was the Nile.

"Tell us," said Akulu, when his friends had sat down—"what the white man was hunting on these walks. What drew him so far from home?"

"Three things he was hunting—rivers and waters he was hunting—the rivers and waters that were hidden in the great country of Africa. He was a hunter of rivers and waters."

"We hear," said Akulu, "though that is a strange word. What else?"

"A path he was hunting among strange tribes and in hard places—this path would be for the caravans of the missionaries who would follow after when the paths were known. He was a hunter of paths."

"We hear," said Akulu, "and that is not so strange. He was just the man who goes before the caravan with a cutlass. We know that man and how to pick him. He must be a strong man."

"And a third thing he was hunting—that was news of the buyers and sellers of slaves. In those days among the tribes of the black people, there went many cruel foreigners—cruel they were and

fierce. It was their custom to buy black people, and where they could not buy to steal. Men, women and children they drove from their homes in the forests and in the grass country—out by the paths to the sea, where they sold them."

"To whom?"

"To white men. And these took them beyond the sea in great canoes—you know—what the white man calls steamers."

"Some little news of this thing I have heard," said Akulu, "though it was never a thing of our neighborhood. But why must Livingstone learn about the slavers? A man of the tribe of God would never be slaving?"

"It was the news he was hunting—not the slaves. He said,—'If I see with my eyes and tell with my mouth the great sorrows of those slaves, their tears, their hungers, their thirsts, their wounds, their deaths by the side of the path, their poor dry bones still wearing the chains and the stocks,—if I get all this news and tell it to the great tribe of the people of God in the world, they will listen and will be angry. They will rise up and forbid those slavers who come from without to spoil the villages of the tribes who live in the

hidden places of Africa! This news was the third thing he hunted. Now you know the three works that God gave him to do; and the things that drew him on those many, many bad paths for those many, many seasons that he walked. Until at the end he was old—he was gray—he was no more than the bones of a man. But when Livingstone came to Africa he was young and strong. He did not know at first that God was going to push him to walk so far. He began to walk among the tribes in the neighborhood of Kuruman." And Assam laid a leaf that was Kuruman upon his map. "But his heart was not sitting down in that neighborhood—it pushed him North."

"What is North?" asked an old man.

"North is where you look when the rising sun is on your right hand. The hidden things of Africa were all there. The lakes and the rivers and the tribes of the forest were there, but the eyes of white men had not yet seen them. I will show you the waters that were found by Livingstone before he died."

Now with leaves and little twigs Assam fur-

nished for them the rivers and the lakes of the heart of Africa.

"Livingstone found this great water, Ngami," said Assam, putting down upon the map a little leaf that was the Lake Ngami.

"And this is the river Zambesi," with a twist of plantain cord he made the river Zambesi, and he told them how Livingstone found "the early things" of the Zambesi.

"And this Lake Nyassa, and Lake Mweru and Lake Bangweolo."

"Other white men found Lake Victoria Nyanza and Lake Tanganyika," asid Assam, "but I will put them down for you to see the many lakes that are in our country. And Livingstone did pass upon the Lake Tanganyika in a canoe. Now you see the lakes and the waters found by Livingstone. And I will tell you that the years that passed him while he did this work were thirty years as white men count years. And I will tell you that the miles he walked were twenty-seven thousand miles. Miles are a thing of the white man. Then I will ask you,—was this a small work that he did, or was it the work of a real man?"

"Let me say," said Ze Zom, "I who am a real man, and a man who if the sun sets will walk by moonlight—I say that I never knew that a man could do so great a work." And the others in the palaver house agreed. Of other things Assam told them. He told them of the sign that God gave him while he was yet a young man, still busy in the South—

"That sign," said Assam, "was a little girl no bigger than your wrist. She was an orphan. Other men than the men of her father's house spoke of selling her. When she heard that talk of selling her she ran from the village to the path where Livingstone was passing. She sat down beneath his wagon. She begged Livingstone to take her in his caravan to his town,—she would walk all the way behind his wagon. Livingstone gave her food and she was glad. That day began well for her,—even so—suddenly she cried out with a loud crying—there was a man with a gun who had followed her! Now she thought, 'It is finished!' But no—a black man who was a man of God and who walked in Livingstone's caravan said to her—

" 'Take the beads from your body.' She had

many beads upon her body, and with those many beads, by the advice of the black Christian, she ransomed her body from the man who had followed her. He went away. Livingstone then hid that child in his wagon—so well that five tens of men could not have found her. This doing that he did for that little girl—I say it was a sign of the work he must do for Africa!"

"I understand your meaning," said Akulu. "But I am thinking,—what a poor price for a girl—just the beads she wore. That man with a gun did not know how to sell a girl! I could have done better!"

Of the scar upon Livingstone's arm Assam told them—and the day when the lion [1] at Mabotsa sprang at Livingstone. Many lions were in that neighborhood and on one day one lion killed nine sheep!

"How do you mean—one day?" said Akulu. "It is one night you mean!"

"I mean one day—and that day in the middle —with the light of the sun everywhere. Livingstone and many black people ran to kill the lion.

[1] There are no lions in West Africa, but the Bulu have a tradition of lions.

Livingstone fired a shot. The lion sprang at him and caught him by the shoulder with eleven of his teeth—the lion broke the white man's bone! He put his paw upon Livingstone's head,—"

"He is a dead man now!" cry out the men in the palaver house.

"No—because there was a man to save him—a black man of God was there. He shot at the lion and missed, but the angry heart of the lion turned away from Livingstone; he sprang at the black man and caught him on the thigh, he caught a third man on the shoulder. Then some shot had found him—for he fell dead! But all those three men still breathed. God permitted them to live. This story that I tell you is a story that white men tell each other and, when they tell it, they marvel."

"Well, we marvel too—even we, who are so wise in the things of hunting. That white man must have had a strong charm against lions! Tell us about that charm."

"Tell us," said Oton—"the name of the black man who saved Livingstone."

"His name was Mebálwe. He was a teacher of men."

"Akeva!" [1] said Oton.

Assam told them of Livingstone's marriage with Mary Moffat. She was a daughter of a missionary, he told them, so that she understood all the custom of the tribe of missionaries,—how they must be enduring, how they must wander among strange tribes and eat out of the kettles of strangers—she understood all those things. About their children Assam told, and the hardships of those early days when this family traveled by ox cart and before Livingstone sent his weary family home, and went on his way alone through the forests of Central Africa. In that palaver house that night mothers sighed over the death of that little month-old girl who was born and buried and whose grave was the first Christian grave in that wilderness. "Pity that woman," the women said, when they heard Assam tell of a five days' drought when Livingstone feared that his children must die of thirst.

"She was a brave woman," said Assam; "Livingstone has written that praise of her in his book. He said that the tears fell from her eyes, but she

[1] Akeva is a kind of thanksgiving word.

did not accuse with her mouth. And on the fifth day a black man of that caravan found water!"

The women in that palaver house heard with sorrow that now Livingstone sent his family home—"Because he was so sorry for them," said Assam, "so sorry for all the wanderings of those little children and that weary woman."

"But who now," asked the women, "would care for Livingstone and cook his food for him."

"There were black men to do that," Assam told them, "for Livingstone had been eleven years, as white men count years, in Africa and he knew the speech of many tribes. More than ever God was pushing Livingstone to the north, upon paths that were too hard for women and children. When Livingstone was alone he walked more quickly than a man may walk with his wife." The men in the palaver house understood that. Black people understand loneliness and home sickness with a great understanding. A black man or woman will die of this "dryness of the heart" that comes from homesickness.

"But could he not make friends with the black men he met by the way? Were there no great

chiefs to befriend him, as my father befriended Ngutu?"

"There were such friends. The first of these was Sechéle. He was not at first a friend, but an enemy. He heard news of a white man and not seeing him with his eyes he was offended. He said: 'Why does he never visit me when he visits? Because he has not been quick to visit me but visits other chiefs who are not so great as I am—I am angry. And when he does come I will do him a mischief.' "

"I understand that man," said Akulu—"tell me more!"

"When Livingstone came at last to Sechéle's town, there was a great sorrow there because two children of the town were dying. And one of these was Sechéle's only child. Livingstone with his white man's medicine healed those two children. Not all the witch doctors in that country could heal those children, but the missionary healed them. Now I ask you,—What mischief did Sechéle then do to the white man who had healed the children of his town?"

"What could he do," cried out Akulu—"but make a bond of friendship!"

"That thing he did," said Assam. "And Livingstone spoke to him about the things of God. When he told Sechéle of the things of God, Sechéle asked him a question.

" 'Why did not the people of your tribe come to tell us this news before? My ancestors have all perished and not one of them knew what you tell me!'

"That word struck Livingstone to the heart. Afterward Sechéle became a person of the tribe of God and walked much in Livingstone's company, but Livingstone never forgot that word of reproach. It was a word to drive him north.

"And now," said Assam,—"I am worn out with all this talking. My voice has died in my stomach. I want to go to bed."

"Ah, my son," said Akulu, "when will we hear how Livingstone walked?—is this all the news of his great walking?"

"It is no more than the beginning," said Assam. "Another night I will tell you more."

Then all the brown bodies of men and women and children in that palaver house rose; they stretched themselves, they lit their reed torches at the fire, and the guests went away murmuring

together of the great things they had heard. The name of Livingstone was heard along the little paths of that forest neighborhood that night.

Mejo said to Assam when they lay under their blanket in the dark of their hut,—

"Ah, Assam, what new name did you choose?"

"I have not chosen yet," said Assam. "I am still choosing."

"I will tell you my new name," said Mejo. "I choose the name of Livingstone." Assam said nothing.

"Do you like that?" said Mejo.

"I think you are full of pride," said Assam. "You chose a name that is too big for you. Since when do you walk upon hard paths and suffer hunger that you may tell those who are ignorant of the things of God? That is the work of a boy who calls himself Livingstone."

Mejo thought to himself, "Assam believes that I am silly and a coward"; and he felt shame for a little while before he dropped asleep.

CHAPTER III: ASSAM TELLS MORE ABOUT LIVINGSTONE

CHAPTER III: ASSAM TELLS MORE ABOUT LIVINGSTONE

THE next night when dark began to fall Akulu beat on his drum the call to his neighbors.

"That is the voice of Akulu's drum," said one to another in all the little villages of that neighborhood. "He calls us to hear the talk of his son Assam. They say that the talk of Assam last night was a great talk. We too, we must hear that talk."

Then men took their spears in their hands and women took their babies in deer-skin slings by their sides, and by the light of torches little companies walked single file on the paths that ran to Akulu's town. All about these people, who talked as they walked, the great forest was dark in the night. The dew was wet on the feet of those people. The torch-bearers waved their torches as they walked, and if there were snakes on the path they slid away from that light.

In the palaver house of Akulu too many peo-

ple crowded. They sat thick upon the bamboo beds. They sat upon the clay floor of that house, having first made a little mat of leaves to sit upon. The many brown arms and the many brown legs were crowded together. The many heads of men and women turned toward Assam in the firelight. Bright eyes shone in that light and white teeth in many laughing, dark faces. Brass ornaments glittered about the necks and the arms of the women and the little girls, their hair was dressed and hung with garlands and fringes of beads and of shells. The women were tattooed and the men were tattooed with great drawings in a purple black upon their brown faces and upon their bodies. On two tall drums that were dance drums, two little wooden images sat—they were the great fetishes of Akulu's village. They had eyes but they did not see Assam, ears they had but they did not hear the great talk about Livingstone that Assam talked all that evening until the middle of the night.

There was still upon the clay floor of the house the map which Assam had made the night before. All day the idlers in the village had bent over it, naming rivers and lakes, and laughing as they

named them. They were proud to know, after all the generations of black men who had died without knowing—the "things of Africa." And now they listened with a great wonder and a great attention to the story of Livingstone's long way.

Upon Assam's map they followed Livingstone from Koboleng to Linyanti, from Linyanti to Loando, from Loando back to Linyanti, from Linyanti to Tette. From Tette they could not follow him home in the white man's boat—that journey was too strange for them. But they welcomed him back to Africa; they followed him up and down the Zambesi river on his second journey that was so much a water journey; they welcomed him upon his return from his second visit home. They made with Assam upon the map the heroic journeys of Livingstone's last eight years, when he wandered from Lake Nyassa to Lake Bangoweolo, from Bangoweolo to Lake Tanganyiki and from there north and west —always hunting the sources of the Nile, and so nearly tapping the sources of the Congo. That lonely and heroic man, in his admiral's cap of tarnished gold lace, came back to the imagina-

tions of those black men and women who heard his story that night.

All the hardships of this journey were very real to the black men and women in that palaver house,—all the violent rains that fell upon him were real to them, all the fury of the violent sunlight, all the swollen rivers that he must cross in canoes that must be borrowed from unwilling owners, all his bleeding wounds when he must make his way through thorny thickets, all his escapes from wild animals and from unfriendly chiefs. These dangers and these cares were of a tribe they knew. The men in that audience were native to the dangers and the deaths of that great forest which sighed about their little clearing in the night, as it had sighed about Livingstone on all the nights of his African wanderings.

"Tell us about the great chiefs he met," they asked. And Assam told them about Sebituane, that great chief of the Makalolo tribe who ruled at Linyanti on the mighty Zambesi river.

"Before Livingstone ever saw Sebituane with his eyes he heard great news of him," said Assam. "That man was famous in the mouths of men. They said that he was a great ruler, a great war-

rior, a great traveler, a great runner, a great hunter, and a great giver of gifts. They said that he was kind to the poor, and that he liked to sit and talk with the least company, and that sitting and talking with humble folk he would share the choicest food with them. Men said of him—'He is wise, he is kind!' "

"Now *there* is a man I would like to visit," cried Akulu, "does he still live?"

"He is dead," said Assam, "and I will tell you about that,—

"Before Sebituane saw the white man, he longed to see a white man. That was his great desire. It was as if God had put that wish in his heart. And when Sebituane saw Livingstone his heart sat down—he was satisfied. He liked Livingstone. When the day that is Sunday came and Livingstone called all the people to hear the Word of God, Sebituane heard that Word. He came to that meeting. He never came to another meeting to hear the Word of God, because he sickened and died. Ten days and four days he lay upon his bed and then he died. The last words Sebituane said were words of kindness to Livingstone's little boy. He said, 'Take

him to Maunka, my wife, and tell her to give him some milk.' He never spoke again. Livingstone made a little song about Sebituane, and it is written in his book—he made a little song of grieving. Those who read his book read that little song and remember Sebituane."

"That is good," said Akulu, "Livingstone had a heart like a black man. It is certainly a thing of grief to remember Sebituane and his great desire to hear the Word of God, and that he heard it only one hearing. I like this news of great chiefs—tell me more."

Assam told them of Sekelétu, the son of Sebituane, who sat in his father's seat and ruled the Makalolo. He told of the great state of that young man, of how when he went upon a journey he was attended by strong men whose headdresses were made of the manes of lions and the waving feathers of birds. He told of how the Makalolo greeted their chief when he passed their villages saying, "Great Lion—mighty chief, sleep, my Lord!" He told of the flesh of oxen that was eaten by the happy men of such a caravan, of their dancing and their feastings, of their long talks about the night fires when they were in

THE LONELY HOUSE
This is the little hut where Mejo lived by himself.

THE CARAVAN OF THE WHITE WOMAN
She is going to visit the school girls in their villages.

THE FERRY

This canoe is hollowed out of the trunk of a tree.

A RIVER JOURNEY

The missionaries on a journey down the river to visit other villages.

camps, of their songs, and of how Skelétu would rush out with a whip of rhinoceros hide to beat his young men until they were quiet. The story of so much grandeur—of so much gilded youth and power made the humble hearers very envious, they wished to wander in such caravans, singing and dancing and feasting. Then Assam told them of the enemy of Sekelétu, who was his half brother—Mpepe, and of how three times in one day he tried to kill Sekelétu. Himself he would be chief of the Makalolo. His spear was raised against his brother when Livingstone passed between the bodies of Sekelétu and Mpepe. The body of the white man saved the life of the black chief. But for his treachery Mpepe was killed by the Makalolo. Assam told this of Sekelétu, —that when Livingstone returned from his long journeys to the west he found his friend Sekelétu a leper.

"Death does not spare beauty," said Akulu.

"You till the ground that covers you," said another. And these two sayings are Bulu proverbs.

Assam told them of the twenty-seven Makalolo men who carried Livingstone's loads on his jour-

neys to and from Linyanti to the west coast, and to the east coast. He told of the goods that was in those loads,—the ivory, the calico, the beads, the brass wire, the many things of barter to buy food by the way, and of the four books that were in the loads. One of these books was a book to write in—in that book Livingstone wrote the things of every day. He told of the robbers by the way, and of those chiefs who came with spears and arrows to kill Livingstone when he should pass. He told of God's care over that caravan, so that when at last they returned to Linyanti there was not a man of the twenty-seven missing.

That all the men of the caravan saw their home again after such dangers upon strange paths was a great marvel to Akulu.

Ze Zom said, "This doing was the doing of God; thus He cares for the men who do His work."

"Tell us what those forest people said when first they saw the sea," said Akulu, "did they rejoice to see the water? Perhaps they danced the dance that the men of our tribe dance when first they stand upon the beach?"

"They marveled. They said, 'The ships are

as big as houses! They are as big as towns! These are not canoes. And we thought ourselves sailors. Only the white men are sailors that come up out of the sea where there is no more earth; but earth says,—I am gone, dead, swallowed up, and there is nothing but water left.' "

"That saying was good," said Akulu. "I myself had such a wonder when I saw the sea. I see that the Makalolo tribe have hearts like ourselves. But I am not able to think why Livingstone, who stood upon the beach after such journeys upon such bad paths, did not now go back in a white man's canoe to his own town."

"Because of his promise," said Assam. "The promise that he made to the Makalolo men that he would take them home."

"Such persistence!" said Akulu. "But I see the custom of the tribe of God is strong for the truth. They are tied by their promises. I see that even in my own town."

Assam told them about the return to Linyanti that was slower than the journey to Loanda. Ze Zom said—

"Yes—because they were now weary." And Assam said that they were often ill.

Those men and women in the palaver house were glad when Livingstone found letters and a package from home at Linyanti. They laughed when they heard that Livingstone called the great falls of the Zambesi river after the name of a chief who was a woman.[1] They were angry at the great chief Mpende who would not befriend Livingstone, but who made charms and spells against him. They marveled at that courage with which the white man of God, when he must cross the Zambesi river with armed enemies at his back, sent his men and his goods over first, while he himself amused his enemies with his watch and his burning glass. They were so surprised at these marvels that they let the caravan pass.

"Even so," said Akulu, "when he himself would get in the canoe, at the last, they would then forget their wonder and would spear him, or shoot him with arrows. Did he not fear?"

"He did not fear," said Assam. "The night before this day, he had said in his heart,—'Perhaps they will knock me on the head to-morrow.' But he read in the Word of God that Jesus said, 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations—and lo,

[1] Victoria.

I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.' That word gave him courage, so that when he saw that he must get in the canoe, he thanked those people for their kindness, he wished them peace and he turned his back."

"Akeva!" shouted the people who were of the tribe of God in that palaver house.

When Assam told them of Livingstone's home going, they asked all the news of his town.

"Besom b'akele hé!" cried out the women—and that is to say—"Lucky ones go home!"

These women were thinking of the towns in which they were born, where their fathers and mothers still lived, and which they had not seen since they had been taken away in marriage.

"Besom b'akele hé!"

They asked were his children glad to see him. And Mary Moffat—was she glad? They liked to hear how Livingstone was admired in his own country, so that the people crowded him in the streets and in the house of God. They heard how the great chief of his country made him a present.

"The chief that was a woman?" asked Akulu.

"That one," said Assam.

"Then it would be a present of food," said Akulu—"food that she had cooked herself."

"Not of food," said Assam, "but of yellow metal—the great treasure of the white man."

"And when Livingstone said he would return to the country of the black people, did she not send a present to the black people by the hand of that man who was going from her town to the towns of the black chiefs? Did she understand that custom?"

"She did," said Assam, "and she sent a present. That present was a boat to go upon the rivers that the work of God might be swift to pass among the tribes of the black people."

"She was then a person of God, that woman?" asked Ze Zom.

"She was."

"Akeva!" cried out the Christian women in the palaver house.

"If I could send her a present!" said one.

"If I could send her some peanuts!" said another.

"If I could embrace her!" said a third.

The people in that palaver house watched the river journeys of Livingstone on the Zambesi

and the tributaries of the Zambesi and into the great Lake Nyassa. They rejoiced when Assam told that Mary Moffat came to meet her husband a day of one rainy season, and when they heard that on a day of the next rainy season she died, there was a great compassion in the hearts of those black people.

"Now, surely," they said, "he walks alone. Now he will not be wishing ever again to go back to his own house, where the hearth is cold!"

"But in his own country there were still his children," said Assam, "and, to see their faces, he did go back to his own country. He saw them, but he could not stay with them, because there were still hidden things in Africa that he had not found. Waters that he had not yet found, better paths for the caravans of the missionaries who should follow him, and more sorrows of slaves than he had counted."

And Assam told his friends the story of the last eight years of Livingstone's life. About his caravans Assam told them, and how some of those men were treacherous. There was a new grief in that palaver house for the old wrong two black carriers did Livingstone when they

ran away, on a rainy day, with his medicine chest, and left him ill without medicine. There was a new praise that night for the faithful boys Susi and Chuma, who did not fail their master even at his death. There was a new sorrow for those days of weaknesses and fever—those months when Livingstone could not walk because his feet were sore.

The women that night cried out when Assam told them of the little boy—"no higher than your knee"—who was bought by a slaver before Livingstone's eyes. Four yards of cloth was paid for that little boy—who cast his arms about his mother, and his mother was sold for two yards of cloth.

Men cried out when Assam told of the great chief called Casembe. That man had a fine house. The gate of his house was ornamented with six tens of the skulls of men.

"Do you speak a true word?" cried Akulu, "now that is news!"

"He was a cruel man," said Assam, "he had many people without ears and without hands. His wife carried two spears. She was carried by men. Men ran before her beating drums and

swinging axes as they ran. But that woman was a good gardener."

"She would be too proud for me," said Akulu.

Assam told them of the Manyuéma tribe and that they were cannibals. "The people of the Manyuéma tribe," said Assam, "did many wicked things and Livingstone wrote those things in his book."

"Stop," said Akulu, "while you open a word for me. You are always speaking about this book—he wrote this thing in his book, he wrote that thing in his book. What kind of a book was this? I want to know."

"We too, we ask that question!" said they all. And one man said,

"I tremble when I think of that book in which the deeds of men were written!"

"His book was like this," said Assam, "Livingstone said,—'It is well that white men should know the hidden things that I find. All the things that I see I will write.' And that man saw everything. He writes about everything. He writes about lip-rings—how the people of some tribes put rings in their lips. He writes about the things of tattoo, and about the red powder

that we black people grind from the bark of trees and rub upon our bodies to make us beautiful. He writes about beads—those beads we love and all the many tribes of beads that traders sell to black men. Those that are black and the white ones and the red beads we call bird's eye—and some tribes call them blood. He writes about all the ways of building huts, and about the little seats and the beds in the huts he writes.

"He writes about ivory—those men who have ivory, those villages where ivory is. About the Babisa tribe he writes that they made their door posts of ivory and their house pillars of ivory."

"Their house pillars of what?" shouted Akulu, and some men in the company sprang to their feet.

"Of ivory!" said Assam.

"Some things I believe, but not that thing," said Akulu. "Even so, the tribe of the missionary is known to tell the truth. Go on."

"He writes about the great sunlight and the great rains that are stronger than the sunlight and the rains of the white man's country. He writes of headmen who are beautiful and those

who are not beautiful; with his eyes he judges them."

"I like that," said Ze, "most white people are stupid about judging the things of the bodies of men."

"He writes about hunters and manners of hunting; and about how God gave skill to blacksmiths, and of how wise black men make salt out of a kind of grass."

"As our fathers did," cried out an old man.

"Yes," said Assam, "and animals he writes about—all kinds of monkeys, some very big and some very little. About giraffes he writes and rhinoceroses, about elephants,—those with tusks and those without tusks. He writes about lions that break through the roofs of houses, and of leopards that steal dogs and a sheep. He writes about an old man that wore bracelets of elephant hide on his arm—two tens and seven bracelets he wore on his arm—and that was the number of elephants this old man had killed with his own spear.

"He writes about the making of clay pots—how women make them with their hands and a little tool of bone. He writes about all tools of

iron and tools of stone. He writes about flowers and about fruit. He writes about drumming and about dancing. He writes about spears and about arrows and about the poison that is good to put on arrows."

"He writes much about blacksmiths and that they are clever, and he tells how the bark of trees is soaked in water and pounded into cloth with a mallet of ebony just as we do.

"He tells how for the dead there is a little hut made and there is put the food that the dead man loved while he was yet alive.

"Pity us all, who are of the tribe who die!" [1]

"He writes about the dancers that dance to make rain, and all the medicine we black people make that the rain may fall. He writes about the great markets of the people of the Manyuema tribe where there gather as many people as come here on a Sunday to hear the Word of God, and about the little girls who run among those many people selling little cups of water for a few small fishes."

"Since I was born!" cried our Mejo's mother, "Now that is a new way to catch fish!"

[1] Bulu proverb.

"And in that market he saw a man with ten jaw bones of ten men hanging on a string from his shoulder—he said he had eaten those ten men, and he laughed."

"And that laugh is written in the white man's book, with the count of those ten jaw bones?" asked Ze Zom.

"It is," said Assam.

"Pity that man of evil deeds," said Ze.

"He writes on a certain day of the Arab slavers that they rushed in among the people who had come to that market and killed more than three hundred of the people of the Manuyema tribe; and ten villages and two villages they burned that day. These things of death they did to give a sign that they were a strong people not to be denied. I cannot remember all the things of death they did. But Livingstone made a strong writing in his book about this matter, and he made a strong prayer to God. And he himself without the force of a gun or other such force, but with the force of a white man and a man of God, he forced the slavers to release thirty slaves. Some of those slaves so released looked at Livingstone, the tears ran down their cheeks. I cannot

tell you all the things he wrote about the sorrows of slaves. He counted all those sorrows,—their hungers, their thirsts, their wounds, their chains and their stocks, their homesickness, their deaths by the way and their poor bones that he saw continually. Until after all his many thoughts of slaves and his long counting of the things of the driven slave he said:

" 'Of five men who are hunted and taken by the slaver—one man alone survives the troubles of the path from his own country to the sea!' "

"Pity those slaves!" cried out Assam's friends.

"Other things he counted and wrote in his book," said Assam. "Every kindness that was ever done to him and his men. Every present of an ox or an ivory or a hen or an ear of corn. Every great kindness and every least little kindness is written in that book. It is written that on a night of the rainy season, when he was upon a journey with Sekelétu, Livingstone lay down to sleep in his wet clothes and Sekelétu gave him his own blanket to cover his body that night."

"I like to think that man had friends," said Akulu, "when he was so long with the black people that the white people forgot him."

"They did not forget him," said Assam, "and I will tell of his great white friend. After those terrible things of death that Livingstone saw among the Manyuema people when the slavers killed them—Livingstone went away. He was sick with sorrow. He went to Njiji. That was a bad journey. Three times in one day he escaped death. One spear on that day grazed his neck; another spear fell at his hand, and a great tree in falling fell so near him that he was covered with dust. But the poor white man felt such a great weakness of the body that he thought he was dying as he walked. And on that day his goods was stolen from him,—all that was left of his calico; a glass to see the things that are far away; his umbrella; five spears."

"Such a day!" said Ze Zom, "If I were not a person of God, I would certainly say that there was a charm to keep that man alive! God is a great keeper!"

"He was now no more than the bones of a man—hunger and sickness had caught him. But he thought always of the food at Njiji—where he would find much goods. He had begged his friends to send him a caravan of goods. He

wrote in his letter,—'I will meet that goods at Njiji!' So he came to that place with an empty stomach, as a man returns from a hungry country to his own town and he believes that there is good food for him in the kettles of his own town.

"Well, when he came to Njiji—here is the thing Livingstone saw. He saw the slaves of the Arab whose name was Shereef and those slaves were coming from the market with all good things in bundles on their heads. They had traded the goods of Livingstone for things in the market. His friends had sent Livingstone's goods to Shereef, the Arab, with this word,—'Keep the goods of this caravan until the white man comes.' And Shereef had stolen that goods!"

"If I were a young man," cried out Akulu, "I would walk to that town of Njiji, and with my own hand I would kill that thief!"

"And we would walk in your company!" shouted the men in the palaver house.

"Listen to the great escape God made for him. Five days Livingstone sat in that town eating what little food he could buy and his heart was

heavy in his stomach. On the fifth day Susi and Chuma ran to tell their master that a white man's caravan was coming on the path from the rising sun. They ran to greet that white man, they thought he was an Englishman. But when Livingstone saw the caravan he saw that the first carrier had a piece of cloth—it was like the piece of cloth that is hung over the mission station on a pole."

"Then it was the American flag," cried out little Mejo.

"You have said it," said Assam, "and that white man was the man the people of America sent to find Livingstone. They said in their hearts,—'All these days that Livingstone does the work of God in the hidden places of Africa —What is his news? Does he still breathe? Or is he dead?' To answer these questions the people of that tribe sent Stanley."

"That was a great meeting of two white men," said Akulu, and the people in the palaver house listened to all the news of that meeting. They heard how Livingstone, when he saw all the goods in that caravan—the pots and kettles and tents

and tin baths, thought in his heart: "Here walks a rich man and not a poor vagabond like me."

They heard how Stanley knew Livingstone by the cap he was always known to wear. They heard how Stanley took off his helmet when he saw Livingstone, and Livingstone took off his cap—as white men do in salutation. And that they then thanked God for their meeting.

The Africans understand homesickness and loneliness too well. They were glad that night in Akulu's palaver house that Livingstone could speak with Stanley the tongue of his own tribe —after six years of loneliness.

"Surely," they said, "the talk of those two white men must have been as abundant as rain." They were glad of the many letters that Stanley brought Livingstone, and of the presents he brought him. When they heard that Stanley begged Livingstone to go home with him, they thought he must surely go. But no, Assam told them, Livingstone did not go home. He remained to finish his work.

"For five moons those two white men ate out of the same kettle, they walked in the same caravan, they slept in the same tent, they talked the

talk of friends. Then Stanley rose up and went away. That morning he went away he could not eat for sorrow. Livingstone showed Stanley the path. Stanley looked at Livingstone many times; he thought in his heart,—'Perhaps I shall never see this man again.' He said to Livingstone,—'The best of friends must part, you have come far enough, now I must beg you to go back.'

"Livingstone gave Stanley great thanks for his many good deeds to him. He said to Stanley, —'God guide you safe home.' They parted. Who knows the things of the heart of Livingstone when he watched the going away of Stanley! No other white man had shown him such kindness. In his book Livingstone wrote about Stanley—'a dutiful son could not have done more.'

"No white man ever saw Livingstone again. All the kindnesses that Livingstone ever knew again were the kindness of black people."

Now it was very late at night—"the night was in the middle"—while Assam told his friends about the end of Livingstone's long way. They listened in silence. "With the eyes of the heart,"

as the Bulu say, they saw the last journeys of that tired man.

"Now he can no longer walk, and the men of that last and faithful caravan make a hammock swung to a pole and they carry him. At night they build little shelters where he sleeps. Coming to a village called Ilala they make a little shelter. The chief of that town is Chitambo, he and his people are all away in their gardens. They hear that the white man is come; they return to look at him where he lies under the eaves of a hut. They lean upon their bows looking at him. The rain falls; and his men build the shelter. Those men know all the work of the white man's camp. Livingstone is glad that night to be in his shelter.

"The next day Livingstone is very weak; he cannot talk with Chitambo who comes to salute him.

"The second night in the village of Ilala, Livingstone is no better. A fire is laid at the door of his hut and some of his men sit about that fire. Once in the night Susi went into the hut and Livingstone speaks to him. Just before the crowing of cocks Susi and Chuma with three other

men went into the hut. There was a candle burning there and by that little light the men saw their master on his knees beside his bed. They knew that to kneel was his custom when he prayed. But soon they saw that he longer breathed. When they touched him they found that he was cold.

"They laid their master on the bed, they covered him. They went out into the night to consult together. They then heard the cocks crow. They did not wail or cry out as foolish men would have done; they knew that they must be wise and silent. They were far from home, without a protector. They were among a strange people, who would accuse them and perhaps kill them when it would be an open word that the white man died in Chitambo's town. Those people of Ilala would be saying that the spirit of the white man was come to trouble their town. So Livingstone's sorrowful men spoke quietly together.

"They chose Susi and Chuma for their leaders. They said that the body of Livingstone and all his goods must be carried to the beach. They said they would keep his death secret. But when the next day was in the middle, Chitambo came

to them. He said, 'Why did you not tell me the truth? I know that your master died last night. You were afraid to let me know, but do not fear any longer. I know that you have no bad motives in coming to our land, and death often catches travelers on their journeys.'

"Chitambo spoke many wise words to those poor men who mourned their master. And in his town he permitted them to prepare Livingstone's body for the journey. In Chitambo's town the heart of Livingstone was buried near a great tree that was a mark for that grave. With a knife they cut upon that tree the name of Livingstone.

"They wrapped the body in cloth, and again they wrapped it in bark. They said 'good-by' to their friend Chitambo and to the people of Ilala; they went off on the paths to the sea carrying their dead master.

"For nine moons they walked upon that journey and God cared for them. Many troubles they saw upon that journey, but none conquered them. Some tribes were friendly to them and some unfriendly. Once they feared that the body of their master would be stolen. Then they pre-

tended to carry it away to bury it. But they did not bury it. They made a new cover for it. The old cover of the bark of trees they threw away, and about the body they wrapped calico until you would certainly have said,—those men are carrying a load of calico. Now none of the tribes by the way knew that the body of a white man was among the loads.

"This long work of carrying their master, those black men did because they loved him; they were faithful men. When they came at last to the beach, they delivered the body to the white men there, and they were praised.

"The body was known by the old scar on the arm, where the lion had wounded Livingstone long days before at Mabotsa, so the body was received by the white men. By them it was sent across the sea. And Susi and Chuma were sent across the sea to tell the people of Livingstone's tribe all the last things of Livingstone and to receive the thanks of the people of his tribe for their long carrying of Livingstone's body.

"That body the white people buried in a great house of God that is in their great town.[1] They

[1] Westminster Abbey in London.

keep his memory; they count the lakes and the rivers that he found; they destroy the things of slaving where he said that they must destroy them. They send missionaries in companies upon the paths where he walked alone. They do not let his name die. Black men who hear his name, as we hear it, never forget that name again. We ignorant ones who say that the spirits of the dead return to harm us—what will we be saying about this white man who is dead since Mr. Krug was a baby, and only good things spring from remembrance of him?"

"I say that he is the ancestor of missionaries!" said Akulu.

"I say that God, when He built the house that is Africa, made a servant to furnish it," said Oton the elder.

"I say that a blacksmith could not have done better than Susi and Chuma did," said the blacksmith of Asok.

CHAPTER IV: AN ADVENTURE WITH DWARFS

CHAPTER IV: AN ADVENTURE WITH DWARFS

THE next day after school, Mejo presented himself to his father in the palaver house.

"I am going with Assam when he goes to teach the school at Mekok," he said. "Some boy must go with him and I must be that boy. I told Mr. Krug this morning that I must be that boy, and now I tell you."

"How do you mean—you *must,*" said Akulu. "Who has tied you to this journey? When I look at you I see you still a child and not yet a person to go on long journeys."

"No one has tied me, but my own heart has tied me. I see that for a person of the tribe of God, even if he is no more than a child, there is work to do."

"I hear," said Akulu, "and I agree. Because I want a boy of mine if he must be a Christian, to be a Christian with courage. When do you leave?"

"School closed to-day and we leave day after to-morrow."

Two days later, at the hour of the rising of the sun, there was a farewell meeting for the boys who were going to teach the vacation schools. Under the eaves of the school house they left the loads they must carry on their journey, and went in to their meeting. Many people of the tribe of God were there to bless these boys before they went. Mejo's mother was there; she looked at her boy in his white singlet and his bright loin cloth, sitting down in the company of the young men who were going upon such lonely journeys. She could not sing with her friends when they sang the songs they love.

"Everywhere with Jesus I can safely go," they sang. And they sang—"Faith is the Victory." But she could not sing with them that morning. Ze Zom prayed for them, and in her heart she could pray. Mr. Krug said wise words to them, but she did not listen to those wise words. Many questions troubled her heart:

"Where will my boy sleep to-night?

"They say there is a great river to cross on that journey. Ah, God, do not let him drown in that river. I have no other son!

"Will the women of that strange town give him good food to eat?"

These questions troubled her. Presently she saw the boys rise to go away. They crowded about their loads that were under the eaves. These loads were carefully tied into a rattan casing, with shoulder straps made of soft strands of plantain fiber. When the boys slipped their arms into these straps the loads just fitted their backs.

Assam had a heavy load of slates and school books. Mejo carried their little personal belongings—some brass rings and needles and fish hooks and matches—these were to buy food and lodging by the way. He carried their lantern and a clock. On top of his load and of every load there was a little piece of dried fish. Mr. Krug gave this present to every boy for a great treat. Now Mejo's mother put a corn cake upon Assam's load and upon Mejo's load.

"Walk well," she said, and every one said to those little caravans,—

"Walk well—God keep you!"

The boys, leaning forward a little under the weight of their loads, looked gravely at the mem-

bers of their clan gathered about them in the early morning light. Already they felt pangs of the homesickness that is a familiar sorrow to the African. They said, "We must go!"

"Go on!"

And they walked away, all leaning forward a little because of their loads. They were still walking in a group until they should come to the first four partings of the way, when they would separate into four companies. And so at partings of the way they would continue to separate all day until two and two would be left to walk together.

At noon of this day, Assam and Mejo came to a fork in the path where their last two friends must leave them. Here the four sat down to eat their corn cakes. From a running stream nearby they drank, making cups of great leaves. In the thick shade of the forest there was no yellow fall of sunlight. One path ran brown among the roots of trees. It was a worn path—even a white man could have followed that path. But the second path at the forking of the way was a path so thin—such a thread of a path—that a white man might easily pass by and never see it. This

was the way to the dwarf people who followed the little dwarf headman, Be.

Oton's son, Obam, was going to spend the vacation speaking the Word of God to the dwarfs. Little Minla, a boy of twelve and one of the white doctor's errand boys, was with him. These two boys had been very carefully chosen for this work. They had a good reputation for endurance. Work among the tribes of the dwarfs is very difficult; Obam and his companion would have much wandering before they would sleep again on the beds or eat out of the kettles of their own town.

"Where will you sleep to-night?" Obam asked Assam.

"I will sleep in Aka's town," said he.

"That is too far," said Obam, "I know this path better than you do. The houses of that town will be barred for the night before you reach there. Sleep with us among the dwarfs. We had word on Sunday that they are in their little old clearing by the Bekua river, drying the meat of the monkeys they killed on their last hunt."

So the four boys went by way of the thread

of a trail through the deep forest to the dwarf clearing.

No human being stirred in that clearing when the school boys came out of the shadow of the forest into the sunny open. Little shelters built of leaves were there, fires burned in the shelters. Fires burned in the center of the clearing, and upon forked sticks about these fires hung the meat of monkeys.

A white man would have thought that the inhabitants of that settlement were far away, but the school boys knew that bright eyes were watching them from the near wall of the forest. They laid their loads aside, sighing with relief. The biggest shelter of leaves they knew must be the palaver house; there they sat down, sure that the dwarfs would soon be coming to salute them.

Oton, the father of Obam, was a friend of Be, the headman of this group. Often Oton had followed them to trade the things of "real people" for dried meat and honey and nuts,—"The things of dwarfs." Obam had come with his father on these trading expeditions, and when Be saw from his hiding place the face of his friend's son, he came quickly to salute him. After

him came many little brown bodies of dwarf men and women and children. Soon that little leafy shelter was full of these—who looked in silence at the beautiful young men of the Bulu tribe, so grand in their singlets and their loin cloths.

Some of the dwarf men were no bigger than Mejo. Some were bigger, but none was so big as Assam. The women were very little women, they wore leaf aprons and tails of grass. The men wore loin cloths of the bark of trees. Be himself wore a loin cloth given him by Oton. He was hoping, as he looked at Obam, that there was much fine goods for him in the loads.

"I greet you all," said Be to the school boys; and they greeted him.

"I ask you—why have you come to us at this time? Is it because of the meat of the last hunt that is now drying by the fires? Did the news of that meat bring you with cloth and other goods to trade for it? Much honey I have in little gourds, do you wish to trade for it? Or nuts, do you wish? Open up the loads quickly so that I may see the beautiful goods brought to me by Obam the son of Oton."

"Two of those loads are on a journey," said

Obam. "They sleep but one night in your town. And these two loads that are mine are not loads of barter. They are my blanket to cover me at night and a lantern and some oil. There are besides some of the words of God that I have brought for your ears. Ah, Be—headman of this people—my father, Oton, and other great men of the Bulu tribe who are now members of the tribe of God—they desire to share with you the "Things from above." So they have sent two of their sons to open for you these things that have been hidden from you in the past."

"As for me," said Be, "I have no use for the words of which you speak. They are not for us. They are for the white people. I believe that trouble will come upon those black people who follow these new things. And even if great black chiefs agree to these new things and follow the white man's God—where will I end if I go on that path? Do the men who follow the new things make medicine for the hunt? Do they know a charm to protect those who climb trees and the steep cliffs? There is no profit for me or for my people in the new way. I myself, before the last rainy season, I went to see the white man

who is the man of God and I begged him for dried fish—No! I begged him for rum—No! I begged him for a leaf of white man's tobacco as big as an eye lash—No! I said 'I have a child at home that is a girl child—give me a little piece of cloth that I may tie it about her head.'—No!

"Then I said to that white man,—'I, the headman Be, have now come to your village for the first time—and am I to leave without a present? Nothing to carry away in my hand?' And the white man said, 'This is not a town where presents are made. This is a town where there are teachers and teaching of the Word of God—He who created you. The old law of God is known in this town and here your children may come and learn wisdom. Here your sick may come and be healed. But if you come to salute me ten tens of times,' said that white man, 'and beg me with as many beggings as there are stars above for the goods of the white man and the riches of men, I will never give you of these as much as an eyelash.' "

" 'If that is so,' I told that white man, 'I am going.' And I went. And I have never desired the new things of which I heard that day. I do

not desire them now. I desire all the things that the men of your father's tribe carry up from the beach on their backs,—the good things of the white man, rum, and cloth, and beads, and iron pots that are not quickly broken as clay pots are. I beg of you, open your loads and we will bargain for the goods. Then you may go with loads of dried meat and honey and nuts."

"There is no trade goods in my loads," said Obam. "I come on another palaver. Every morning at dawn, and every evening when the stars are created, I will teach you of the things of God. These words that you hate before you have heard them—perhaps you will love when you have heard them. All this moon and the next moon I will open to you this wisdom."

"We are not sitting down in one place, as your father does," said Be. "We people who are dwarfs must do the forest work, we must go on the many little paths hunting and fishing and nutting. So it cannot be that you will visit us for two moons. We rise and go away from this place to-morrow."

"Where you go, I too, I will go," said Obam.

"And sleep where we sleep?"

"As you say."

"And eat what we eat?"

"Certainly."

"Since I was born!" cried out Be, "I never saw a son of your father's tribe that would endure these things. What new customs people begin to have!" And he slapped his thigh and laughed. All the little dwarf people laughed. They all laughed at the foolishness of the four Bulu boys who sat in their palaver house looking very grave and dignified.

That night was a night of full moon. There was a great sound of drumming in the little clearing; with the palms of their hands the drummers beat the skin that was stretched on the heads of the upright drums. In the silver moonlight, the dark little bodies capered to the sound of that drumming.

When Obam lit his lantern that light was a golden light. He drummed upon the call drum a call to assemble. Then he sat upon the call drum. The four Bulu boys sitting together by the golden light of the lantern began to sing. One by one the dwarfs drew away from the dance —they gathered to the sound of that singing—

even the drummers at last came near. The singing was about the love of God. Presently among all those people who sat in a dark group upon the ground, Obam rose to tell them of the remembering with which Zambe [1] had remembered them.

"All these generations of men who said 'He-who-created-us' has forgotten us—they were all mistaken. 'He-who-created' remembered—so much He remembered that He made a visit. That visit was in the body of the son of 'Him-who-created.' That son was the Lord Jesus. And He is the chief of the new tribe that is being created by Zambe—'He-who-created' all tribes. Jesus is the headman. He shows those who follow Him the custom of the new tribe that is a different custom from the old custom of the black people, and the law of this custom is ten words of law. He alone knows the path beyond death.

"Many things of all this news I will tell you on the nights of these two moons," said Obam. "But now we who have traveled to-day,—we will go to bed."

The dwarfs laughed as they listened to Obam

[1] Bulu name for the Creator.

and his news—a laughter of surprise and of amusement. They laughed and talked together as they moved away in the moonlight. Soon the drums throbbed again and the dancers leaped above their black shadows.

The four Bulu boys lay beside the fire in the palaver house that was no more than a little leafy roof. Those dwarf beds were too small for the Bulu boys, they twisted and turned and stuck their legs out into space. All four were a little homesick.

Mejo said to his brother,—

"Ah, Assam, if they laugh at us in the town where we are going—how I shall feel shame in my heart. How can we bear it if they laugh at us!"

"How did Obam bear it?" said Assam. "God gives the strength to bear it. What is your name to-night? You who run from laughter!"

The next morning Assam and Mejo went away on their own path. Sleeping in the villages by the way they made four days' journey without accident. On the fifth day they were detained by a headman who asked many questions about the

things of God. That is why the boys came late to the crossing of the So river.

When they came out of the forest to the broad water the last red was in the sky. There was no village on the west side of the river, and on the east side the village was set back from the bank. The canoes of the village were grouped against the side of that further bank. The sound of drumming came across the water—all the cries of Assam and Mejo were lost in the drumming. They shouted themselves hoarse, before Assam said,—

"Those people will dance all night. We must just sleep where we are." And he set about gathering wood for a night fire.

Never before in his life had Mejo slept like this without arms and without shelter. Always when he had camped in the forest there were "real men" of the tribe with bows and arrows and spears; then he had slept in a great trust of his father and his father's friends. Now he watched his brother in the growing dusk with a fear that he was ashamed to speak. Assam laid his fire by the water's edge where there was a little sandy clearing. He filled his little iron

pot with the river water and set it on the glowing heart of his fire. He put a great snail into the pot.

"It is good that we found a snail this morning," said he. "You have the salt—put in a pinch."

He took a corn loaf out of his pack. Upon some leaves that Mejo had spread out like a mat, the boys sat down. They heard the rushing of the great river and they felt a loneliness come into their hearts.

"So much water is too much water," said Mejo, rather anxiously.

Then the pot began to boil—that sound was a sound of home. The night darkened about them but their fire sent up ruddy flames. Above them the stars were thick as rain; and the thoughts of these two boys called upon God, the Maker of stars, to protect them. Old fears of spirits who walk at night to do mischief to men, were stirring in their hearts, but they quieted these old fears with the new hopes and the new promises. They feared the beasts of the forest, but their fire should frighten these.

They ate their supper and lay down upon the

bed of leaves. When the late moon rose, Assam and Mejo were sleeping beside a fire and a thread of smoke. And when the guinea fowl called before the dawn they woke—as travelers must awake when the guinea calls—as safe and sound as any other sons of their father's house.

"That was a good night," said Assam. He began to call for a ferryman, and when the first light of day was gray upon the water, there came a man with a canoe to ferry them across.

That day when the sun was in the middle, the boys knew that they were in the neighborhood of Mekok. In a town where they rested they were told,—"You will cross but two streams and beyond the second stream you will find the gardens of Mekok. The women of Mekok will then be upon the path returning from their gardens to the village." And this was true. The women of Mekok were indeed upon the path. They cried out when they saw the school boys with their load of slates.

"They have come—Akeva! The teachers have come. Now we believe the word of Asala!"

Back in the gardens other women heard the news. Mejo heard the glad shout of his little

sister as she ran through the thick screen of the cassava plants. Presently that little brown body sprang into the path and embraced the brothers. Such laughter! Such shouting! Such clamor for news of home! Asala ran before them into the village. She dared to go into the palaver house, though her husband had not sent for her. Out of breath she told him that the teachers had come and that they were her brothers.

Now the headman saw the boys enter the clearing from the forest. They wore singlets and loin cloths. They leaned a little forward under their loads. The smallest carried a lantern. They walked with the plodding gait of travelers who have walked for many days.

"Those boys are tired," said Efa, "it would be well that you cook them good food. Ask your ntyi [1] to kill a chicken for those boys; and you yourself make the mango nut gravy for that chicken."

Thus were Assam and Mejo kindly welcomed in the town of Efa Nlem. Asala ran to cook for them. Efa received them in the palaver house.

[1] A senior wife into whose care a little girl wife is given, and with whom she will remain until she is marriageable.

They laid aside their loads and sat at ease under the brown roof. The villagers gathered to look at the teachers, little naked boys clustered in little groups and murmured their little comments to each other. But there was no great conversation as yet between Efa and his guests. There would be time for that. Only Efa said,—

"I hope that you have brought white man's medicine."

And Assam said, "Yes"—he had skin medicine and medicine for the heat in the body and medicine for ulcers.

"That is good," said Efa. "With what they have my people will buy those medicines." And he began to smoke his long pipe in silence.

Mejo looked at Efa when Efa was not looking at him. "I like him," he thought; "but I fear him too, and that is good." Mejo looked about at the little groups of boys and at the women who were looking at him. Three or four real men were sitting by the ashes of the fires. Mejo was embarrassed to look at them. But in his heart he felt important. It was fine to have so many people concerned about him and about Assam. He remembered his father's story of

Ngutu and of how Ngutu first came to Abiété. "I too," thought Mejo, "am a teacher of the new things."

And suddenly he said, "I am thirsty!"

Immediately two little girls rose and went out into the sunlight—their little grass bustles beating about their brown legs. From a nearby hut they returned with gourds of water. One presented her gourd to Assam, the other drew a corncob stopper from the neck of her gourd and presented it to Mejo.

As Mejo raised the gourd to his lips he met the eyes of a boy in the shadow of a corner. This boy was almost a man, his hair was finely dressed and studded with blue beads. He wore a splendid loin cloth. About his arms were many ivory bracelets and about his neck hung a great amulet.

"That young fellow has such style," thought Mejo, "that he must be the headman's son. But he looked at us without the friendly eye."

Now Efa told them that they might go with Asala.

"You are weary and you should rest," he said. Asala's ntyi is named Bilo'o. Lie upon the bed

in her house until the time of the setting of the sun. Then return to speak with me of the many things of school."

In the house of Bilo'o there was happy talk of home. There were portions of good food laid out upon green leaves by willing little brown hands. About the doors of Bilo'o's hut clustered the persistent bodies of little boys who murmured together. Back of these little boys were older boys, silently looking at their teachers,—those young benefactors who had come to open up the new paths to the feet of their tribe. Women entered the hut quietly by the back door. They were the women who were a long time wishing to hear the Word of God; they brought little presents of food.

Presently Assam said to Mejo—very low—"Don't be proud!"

And Mejo said softly—"I hear! I will keep pride down. Did you see the young man who does not like us?"

"He that sat in the shadow? I saw him. Even so, we must try to draw him to us."

That night Efa and Assam spoke long together of the things of school.

"That big new house at the end of the clearing is your school house. My people have been a long time building it. All the boys of the neighborhood have helped. Asala told us how we must cut logs of the mesung[1] tree for seats. There are rows of seats in the school house. The walls are very low as Asala said they should be. And for yourself we have built a house too. It is a good little house, all new, and near the school house. There are two beds in that house. There is a window in that house like a white man's window. A woman has made a fire between the two beds and now, if it pleases you, you may go to your house. Ah, Bekalli!" said Efa, and a boy rose in answer. "Take your teacher to his new house."

At this word the youth with the unfriendly eyes rose from his place.

"Ah, father," said he, "I have a word to say!"

"Say it!" said Efa. Every one looked at the young man. The firelight shone upon his bright beads, his ivory bracelets, and his body rubbed with oil. In his dark face his eyes and his teeth were bright.

[1] The umbrella tree.

"Since I was born," said he, "did you ever build me a house? What day did you ever say to me as you now say to this stranger,—'Go sleep in the new house I have built you!' This is a question I ask you!"

Efa looked in surprise at his son.

"Ah, Bekalli," said he, "I hear with astonishment this word of reproach. Are not all the houses in my village your houses? All my houses are your houses. Why should you grieve because I show a kindness to these young men who have come to do us the work of teaching? What shall I say further?"

"This you may further say," shouted Bekalli trembling,—"You may say that you give me the new house—I who am your eldest son. Let the sons of strangers sleep in the house that is outside the village."

"But it leaks," said Efa mildly.

"Then let the strangers patch the roof with leaves. Doubtless all the roofs of their father's town are patched with leaves. Let them cut the grass that grows about that house. And, if they fear the evil spirits that come about that house

at night, let their new God protect them; give me the new house!"

Efa looked in silence at his son, who continued to tremble, standing up very straight in the firelight. Then he said,

"There is a headman in this town and I am that headman. Our guests will sleep in the house I have built for them. And to-morrow we will begin to cut bark for the walls of a house I will build you, and to gather leaves for the thatch."

"If you build me ten houses," said Bekalli, "I will never sleep in one of them!" And he put his leg over the high sill of the door and went off into the dark.

CHAPTER V: ADVENTURES OF ASSAM AND MEJO

CHAPTER V: ADVENTURES OF ASSAM AND MEJO

NOW began for the two brothers a time of great busyness; there were all the things of school to be made ready.

Little lads with brooms of leaves swept out the school house with its rows and rows of log seats. As they scrambled about under Mejo's leadership they made their little silly comments upon the things of learning.

"Now we shall know all the things of the white man," they told one another. "And about the tribe that lives down in the earth we shall know. And about the many moons that are made and that are lost again; and about a country that is not a forest country; and about the thing that is a clock. The teacher has that thing and it shows a sign to him about the time of day—as if it were the sun."

And all the little sweepers paused to look at Assam's clock where it ticked on a little rough table at the end of the school room.

"Get busy!" said Mejo sternly, and once more was heard the rustle of their brushy brooms.

Assam hung his alphabetical charts about the room. All his little adventurers would begin their adventures upon these charts. And they all yearned to be off; they dropped their brooms to stand before those white banners, tattooed with mystic figures. Daring little brown fingers ventured here and there in that strange country until Mejo forbade them; the older boys of the village—like copy-cats—cried out the same prohibition. Others hung about the slates. One unhappy little boy dropped a slate and was carried shrieking to Assam. He howled and he trembled, rolling horror-struck eyes.

"The writing stone is broken," said the bigger boys who had captured him, and the captive writhed in their hands.

The slate was not broken, but an awe of slates fell upon the little sweepers.

The next morning in the many villages of that neighborhood was heard the first drumming of the school drum,—

"The promise that we made yesterday we keep to-day!
"The promise that we made yesterday we keep to-day!"

The villagers, listening to the clamor of that phrase beaten out on the drum of Efa Nlem's town, knew that school was calling. Everywhere in the huts little boys bustled about, worrying their mothers for a bite to eat before they went to school, for a hen to pay the school tuition, for a bottle of palm oil, for a basket of peanuts, —for anything with which to pay for school.

Bigger lads at the sound of that drumming were about the same business. They took ivory bracelets off their own arms, leopards' teeth off their own necks. They twisted the long vine that is the bush rope into marketable coils, they looked long at knives which they would never carry again, but must pay to go to school. Sad partings took place that day between boys and their possessions.

In the palaver houses of these villages the youth of the tribe went to inquire of age. Every boy must receive of his father permission to do this new thing.

Some fathers said, "It is well, go in peace and, with what you learn, return to strengthen the tribe."

Some fathers said, "Why do you ask me? Your heart is set on it; don't bother me."

Some fathers raged and called to mind the old wisdom of the tribe, the old custom, the things of magic—all these good old ways that would now be forgotten because all the fine young lads were turning away to foolishness.

But all these fathers of their different sorts—all these fathers felt deserted and lonely when they saw the little companies of brown bodies, laughing and chattering, go away out of the village to school!

"No man knows where this will end," they said in their hearts.

Sometimes that morning when the school drum was calling, a little girl stole into the palaver house to beg of her father. Some little girls never found courage to open their mouths, they stood about idly until they were called by the women who were going to the gardens; then they went slowly away. And all that day the elder women scolded them or laughed at them, saying:

"To-day you walk like a worm without eyes."

"You are as slow to-day as a chameleon."

Some little girls said what they wanted,—

"I want to go to school!"

"I envy those who go to school."

"Ah, Father, me too—permit me too!"

"School! What next? Shall I bring a curse on my town by sending women to school! Who would marry you then? Get along!"

In the school house Assam was writing the names of the boys who were paying their tuition to Mejo. The pupils stood in line; one at a time they put down their treasure of payment; they murmured their names—watching with awe the hand of Assam traveling over paper and leaving a trail of marks. Some were so taken out of themselves that they could not speak their names; they panted for their turns to come and when at last they stood before the teacher, with his magic hand, they fixed him with vacant eyes and were dumb.

Some coming to their turn had no tuition; these were cast out weeping—to return again to-morrow, as Assam knew very well they would—with the offering.

Once the voice that answered Assam was a

girl's voice, and he looked up into an eager girl's face.

"My name is Adda."

"Does your father permit you to come to school?"

"My father does not know. I ran away."

"It is forbidden that a girl should come to school without her owner's permission. To receive girls who have run away would be to hunt trouble in the school."

"We told her!" cried the boys in a line. "And we said, who wants girls in school? They are as stupid as hens!"

"Be still," said Assam. "If you ask,—who wants the girls in school? I will tell you that the teacher wants them. Go in peace," he said to Adda. "It may be that God will change your father's heart and then you may return."

She went away crying.

Another girl's voice spoke, and this was Asala.

"He says I may," whispered Asala, over the edge of the table. "I am to go to school, Efa permits me."

Her eyes were brilliant in her little, soft, brown face that was not tatooed. She laid her tuition

before her brother Mejo,—it was a fishing net. Such pride was in her heart that she could not conceal it.

"She will be too proud," said a boy in line, and others said so. But the teacher frowned, and again it was still while the name of Asala was written on the school roll.

At the end of ten days there were one hundred and twenty-five pupils in school. There were groups of ardent adventurers before all the primary charts. Little boys and big boys labored over slates, sticking out their tongues; and when the slates ran short there were classes making marks upon the sand outside the school house. Mejo, standing before his classes and Assam before his, struck the charts with pointers, and there was a murmur of response,

"B—a=ba."

"B—o=bo."

These were the little murmurs that broke the hot silence in that little bark shelter. At the opening period and the closing all those young voices sang the new songs that they were so quick to learn. With a curious obedience they were all day obedient to their young teachers. They who

had run so wild so long now rose on signal and were seated on signal. On signal they spoke or were silent. They curbed their voices and their bodies to a new custom, and behind their tattoo their faces looked out with a common expression of discipline.

Among the pupils, many were as old as Bekalli, Efa's eldest son. But Bekalli never came to school. Sometimes he stood on the outside of the low wall, looking in and smiling. Sometimes, when the real men of the village passed the school house on the way to hunt, Bekalli stopped at the open door—leaning on his bow-gun, or signalling to the older boys. He never saluted the teacher as the real men did.

Once on a bright moonlight night when Assam lay with Mejo in bed, they heard a murmur in the school house. Assam, creeping close to trap the intruder, saw over the wall the head of Bekalli. He stood before a chart that was very white in the moonlight. With his dark finger he traveled from letter to letter and to himself he murmured their names.

"He is saying the names of letters," Assam

whispered to Mejo when he went back to bed, "but he is mistaking them!"

All the first months of school there was a great contentment in the town of Mekok. Assam, speaking the Word of God at the morning and the evening prayers, saw more and more brown bodies gather about him in the early and the late dusk. Women who had begged the Word of God from Asala's little store now received a daily portion from Assam, and went away to their gardens murmuring over and over the verse of the morning and the evening lesson. On a Sunday when Assam beat the call to the service, many real men came to hear for themselves these new things that were rumored everywhere. Of an evening when Assam sat in his little house, one and another would come to ask him privately of these things—as Nicodemus came to Christ long ago.

To the house of the two brothers there came the sick who desired to try the white man's medicine. Little gaunt children devoured by itch were healed, poor bodies fading away with malaria were restored. The simple drugs for simple ills were dispensed by the boys, who put away the

goods received for medicine with the goods received for tuition, until all this treasure should be carried back to the mission at the close of school.

These were good days. There could be no enemy, you would have said, in the town of Mekok. Until the night Efa Nlem fell ill,—then trouble came as thick as rain. Assam woke to find a woman shouting at his door.

"Rise," she cried, "and make medicine for the headman—he is dying!" and she rushed away.

By the light of his lantern, Assam found the town gathered in the palaver house. Efa lay upon his bed, leaning against the shoulder of Bilo'o; his breath was short and his body burned under Assam's hand. But he was not unconscious. He begged Assam to give him the white man's medicine.

"Ah, my son," he said to Assam, "I am dying!"

Assam gave him quinine. But when two days passed and the heat did not pass from Efa's body, Assam told Mejo that he did not know what to do. This illness did not look like the old sickness of the heat in the body that the white man calls malaria.

On the second day the great medicine man from Medong came to heal Efa. His healing was not a noisy healing as so much witch doctoring is noisy. This famous witch doctor made a little booth for himself of leaves, and his communication with the sick man was by means of a bush rope strung like a cord between the leafy booth and the body of Efa where he lay in the palaver house.

"This is a new kind of charm," said Assam to Mejo, "I think he learned it from some beach people."

The medicine man would talk with no one but Bekalli. Bekalli alone had seen his face during the time of his present operations, but his high rough shout like the bark of a gorilla awed the villagers where they sat in the palaver house. There they sat and sighed, while Efa groaned, and the cord of bush rope attached to his body was jerked and trembled.

Assam and Mejo felt strange now in the village, they felt uneasy. They were grieved too, for Efa had been kind to them and Assam feared that he was about to die. "If he dies," he thought, sitting with Mejo in his little house,

"then the town's people may trouble us. They may say that we gave him a witch." Mejo, looking at Assam's face, read these thoughts there.

At this moment a real man of the town stood at the door.

"You are summoned," he said, and he went away.

This was bad. The two boys did not dare hesitate, they followed him immediately. In the palaver house they were fixed by every eye, only Efa did not gaze at them. He lay as if he slept. There was a great stillness in the palaver house and the brothers, standing besides Efa's bed, were still. Mejo felt terribly frightened; he trembled, and Assam put his warm arm around his little brother's shoulders.

Suddenly Bekalli rose and began to speak.

"You all know that I killed a leopard ten days ago with my own spear. With your eyes you saw the leopard still warm upon the floor of this palaver house. Now I ask you,—did you see with your eyes the leopard's whiskers?"

One and another said, yes, they had seen the leopard's whiskers.

"Even so," said Bekalli, "when I began to

BEKALLI—SON OF EFA

THE SMALLEST GIRLS IN ASSAM'S SCHOOL

These little girls are going to pay their school tuition with the peanuts and the corn in their baskets.

THE BIG BOYS IN ASSAM'S SCHOOL

skin that leopard there were no whiskers—not as much as your eyelash!"

A great silence fell upon the people in that palaver house. Mejo and Assam were not the only frightened creatures there.

Bekalli continued: "I do not accuse the members of my father's household, nor of his town, nor of his neighborhood. Why should they hate my father or hunt a way to hurt him? I say, it is these strangers who are troubling my father."

At this moment the bush rope on the floor was violently agitated. Every eye in the room looked with horror at that cord.

Bekalli continued:

"These strangers have brought new things to this town that are not the things of black men. They have brought a new magic to this town. And a new power. By the strange magic of their power they cast a spell upon the boys in school. All day in that school there is a great silence except as these strangers permit the boys to speak!"

A curious look of intelligence dawned upon many faces in that crowd.

"But the magic," Bekalli went on, "did not

have power over real men. None of you felt that power. I did not feel it. My father continued at all times to speak as he pleased. For this reason, because the new magic had no power over my father, these strangers struck him with a leopard's whisker."

Now a murmur began to grow in that company. One took counsel with another. Bekalli standing in the midst said no more, but a friend of his brought the bright leopard's skin from where it was stretched to dry in the sun; it was spread upon the clay floor, and the absence of whiskers was noted. The clamor of comment grew, and Efa groaned. Every one was then still; but at the sound of that groan, angry eyes were fixed upon the teachers. Mejo felt Assam's hand grip his shoulder, and Assam began to speak.

Although he was a person of the tribe of God, he said, he was not ignorant of the old things of the black man. His father was Akulu Mejo—wise in every knowledge of magic. Therefore he knew that the next word from the mouth of Bekalli would be a word about the trial by poison.

At this Bekalli sprang to speak. But Assam continued very quietly to say that there would be no help for him nor for his brother if they were tried by poison, and fell, and were killed by the daggers of strangers in this town of strangers. Many innocent men had fallen in the ordeal by poison, and so might he fall and his little brother. But what hope would there be for Efa in their death?

"There is indeed a new power in this country," said Assam. "It is the power of the people of the tribe of God to heal disease. It is not a magic, it is a knowledge—a wisdom. The doctor of the tribe of God has that knowledge. At the missionary town there is such a doctor. He is not a witch doctor—he does not speak of witches. With his great wisdom he hunts the sickness in the body of a man, and he makes a medicine to cure that disease. If I lie here dead in this palaver house and my brother beside me,—how will our two deaths heal Efa—our friend and the father of this village? But if four real men of this village rise up and bear Efa upon the path that I can show them, and if I lead them to the missionary town, and if we there beg the Chris-

tian doctor to heal this disease which has caught Efa,—then shall the living praise God!"

From the bed where Efa lay he suddenly spoke, and his friends were astonished.

"I desire to follow Assam to the town of the Christian doctor. Those who love me must carry me!"

And nothing more would Efa say but those two words in his feeble voice,—

"I desire! I desire!"

None in that company dared oppose him, not even his angry eldest son. The real men of the neighborhood were bound to obey him. They had respected Assam, and there was a calm and a courage about his manner at this time which impressed them. It was determined to carry Efa at night lest the heat of the day overcome him.

That very night in a hammock made of Assam's blanket tied to a pole and borne by relays of two men, Efa went away upon the path to the place where the sun sets. Assam led the way with his lantern.

Bekalli was left to rule the town and Mejo was left to keep the school.

Mejo stayed because his brother said that the school must not "die."

"It is our work, however hard. It is harder for you than for me," said Assam. "I wish I could take you with me, but you see how God has made a path for us in all these dangers, and we must believe that He will care for you even when you are alone. Try to do all the big works and let the little works go. Take the clever boys to help the slow ones. You know if I will hurry back."

And Assam had begun to hurry already. Before Mejo could say any of the fear and loneliness of his heart Assam's lantern was walking away beside Assam's legs. Soon that dear light was lost upon the forest path.

Mejo stood at the door of his house, asking his heart how he could sleep alone in that place. If even he had had his blanket or his lantern! And while he was dreading to enter that little hut, where he would miss his brother too much, Bekalli came through the dark. He carried a torch. His mother was with him and had a load of his belongings. He did not speak to Mejo; he entered the teacher's house and his mother followed him.

Presently she came out again. She carried the torch, the school clock and all the books.

"Follow me," she said, "by order of Bekalli I show you the path to your house. He says he will send you all the school goods to-morrow."

Poor Mejo could not speak. He followed that woman to a lonely cabin that was a little way outside the village. She turned to leave him at the door of that hut and he begged her for the torch.

"There is no fire in the house, I beg you to leave the torch."

"Then show me the path back to my own house!"

And Mejo showed her the path back to her own door by the torchlight. He was hoping that some of the older school boys would see him going away by himself and would pity him. "Perhaps some two will come to sleep with me in that lonely house," he thought. But none did. He entered his new house alone. By the light of the torch he saw the mushrooms growing out of the moldy clay floor and he saw the gray mold on the bamboo beds. He smelt the odor of a musty, unused house.

He knew that he must work quickly for his torch was burning down. There was no firewood in the house, but there was a rotten drum and a big log rough-hewn to a stool. He would make a fire of these. And he busied himself.

Moving about in the stillness of that deserted place, he heard the dropping of heavy dews from the plantain leaves back of the house. And presently he heard another sound there—a rustle and a breathing. His heart stood still. The back door of the little hut was barred, while the front door was open. A friend, he thought, would come to the front door. And he thought of the witch doctor, with his painted face, who had left the town in anger. The rustling crept along the rear wall of the house and breathed against the door. Mejo thought of spirits. He smelt an odor of wood smoke through the cracks in the bark, and he thought again of the witch doctor. Poor little Mejo trembled, standing very still. Then he heard a soft little voice and it was the voice of Asala!

"Ah, Mejo," she whispered through the door, "Let me in! Bilo'o and I—we are here. We crept secretly through all the back yards. We

have come to keep you company! But first shut the front door, so that none may see!"

Mejo slid the bark door into place and barred it. He was laughing. He could not help laughing he was so glad. Asala came in with Bilo'o. Mejo suddenly loved his little sister with a great love that was the sum of his love of his brother and his father and his mother and the village at home. She looked at him with her sweet bright eyes. She carried a kettle hot from the fire. Bilo'o carried firewood still warm and from the smoking ends she blew a flame. Soon the kettle was on the fire, the sound of its boiling made a sense of home about the two children and the childless woman who sat by the fire. Softly they began to speak together in a great peace and quiet.

"Every night Bilo'o and I will come to you like this," said Asala. "We will then cook your food for you. None shall know, and when the food is eaten and the work is done, you will teach Bilo'o from the word of God. Ah, Mejo," said Asala, looking at her brother with little lights in her eyes, "My ntyi Bilo'o wishes to become a member of the tribe of God!"

CHAPTER VI: THE RETURN OF THE ADVENTURERS

CHAPTER VI: THE RETURN OF THE ADVENTURERS

THESE things happened in the time of the new moon. All that moon and when that moon was lost Mejo did the work of Assam in the village.

In the morning and in the evening he called the villagers to assemble and he read to them the Word of God and prayed. More and more of the villagers answered the call to these daily gatherings, when the book of God was opened up to them by a little lad. On a Sunday he called them for a service, and they began to learn the custom of the service, singing with the school children, and stumbling along with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments.

In all these matters Mejo tried to conduct himself like Assam. He was not thinking now of Livingstone or Susi or Chuma—he was remembering his brother Assam, who was so kind and so dignified and so quiet. When in the

morning he opened the school, standing by his table before the rows of boys,—so many of them bigger and older than himself—he stood like Assam. He met all those attentive eyes with Assam's expression, and in the voice of Assam he gave his orders. He had no time to be frightened or to be proud.

He put the boys who were studying the advanced charts over the laggards who were still stumbling through the alphabet. He exacted, with a severity which he had learned from Assam, a good physical discipline. Classes rose on signal like one man. Silence reigned, broken only by the murmur of recitations; an austere little teacher hunted and reproved dirty hands and jiggered feet from class to class.

Bekalli, swaggering into the school one day early in Assam's absence, was greeted in order. The school rose like a machine; many voices like one voice said,

"Our chief! Mbolo."

And like a machine the many brown bodies were seated.

"Ah, Mbolani," murmured Bekalli, looking at them a little awed. In action like this all these

boys and youths seemed strange to him,—no longer like his neighbors and companions. Of course he was, in his father's absence, the keeper of the town. He came in often after this; they saluted him, and he returned the salutation.

The teacher and the young headman never spoke together. But neither did the headman further persecute the teacher. Bekalli adopted more and more the manner of his father, Efa, and Mejo was more and more like his brother, Assam.

Asala and Bilo'o came every night to the hut outside the village, and no longer in secret. Bekalli knew of their visits, but did not forbid them. Other women began to visit Mejo with little presents of food. School boys continually hung about the door of that hut to observe and admire their teacher. Imitations of Assam's manner, passed on through Mejo, began to be seen in every village of that neighborhood and upon every path.

Thus it was that Assam returned to find Mejo in a great peace and busyness. On a day after the making of the new moon, when the sun was

in the middle and the boys were filing out of school, the cry went up—

"B'asoya!" (They have come.) And there was a stampede. All the school boys and all the villagers ran to the path that came from the west. Mejo stood at the door of the school. He saw Efa come from the shade of the path into the violent sunlight of the clearing. Efa wore a felt hat and a gorgeous loin cloth. A leopard's skin hung upon his shoulders. He carried a staff. He was laughing. A great sound of shouting and of laughter filled the clearing. Brown bodies, big and little, pressed about Efa.

Presently Mejo saw the dear body of Assam move away from the crowd. Assam was looking for his little brother.

"Is he well?" he asked one and another of the school boys.

"Certainly he is well!" they answered. And Assam saw Mejo come to meet him from under the eaves of the school house.

They met, greeting one another with their eyes. They could not speak their hearts out in that public place, with school boys gathering

about them. Assam gave Mejo his lantern and a little pack he carried on his head.

"Why do you go upon that path?" he asked his little brother, when Mejo turned out of the clearing.

"Our house is upon this path," said Mejo.

Assam turned to the many boys who crowded at his heels—

"Go home," he said, "let two brothers speak together in peace."

And a great peace fell about the two sons of Akulu Mejo where they sat together during the noon hour in that little hut that was away from the clamor of the village. Only a little girl came to salute her elder brother,—to bring him food and to sit upon his knees in the old Bulu custom of greeting when the young of the family salute their elders.

All the news of their father's town was good and all the news of the journey. Efa's healing was a good healing. The doctor said that Efa's sickness was a sickness from eating meat that was too old. Perhaps the meat of the leopard was too old when Efa ate the last of that meat.

Now that he was well again he was a great friend to Assam, and to others of the tribe of God.

"He and the real men of the tribe of God have spoken much together of the things of God. He has asked me every day upon the path many questions about these things—as a man asks when the spirit of God knocks at the door of his heart."

"Then he will be a great friend to our school," said Mejo, "and it will be more than ever a good school."

"Silly!" said Assam, laughing. "Did you not see the rain fall yesterday?"

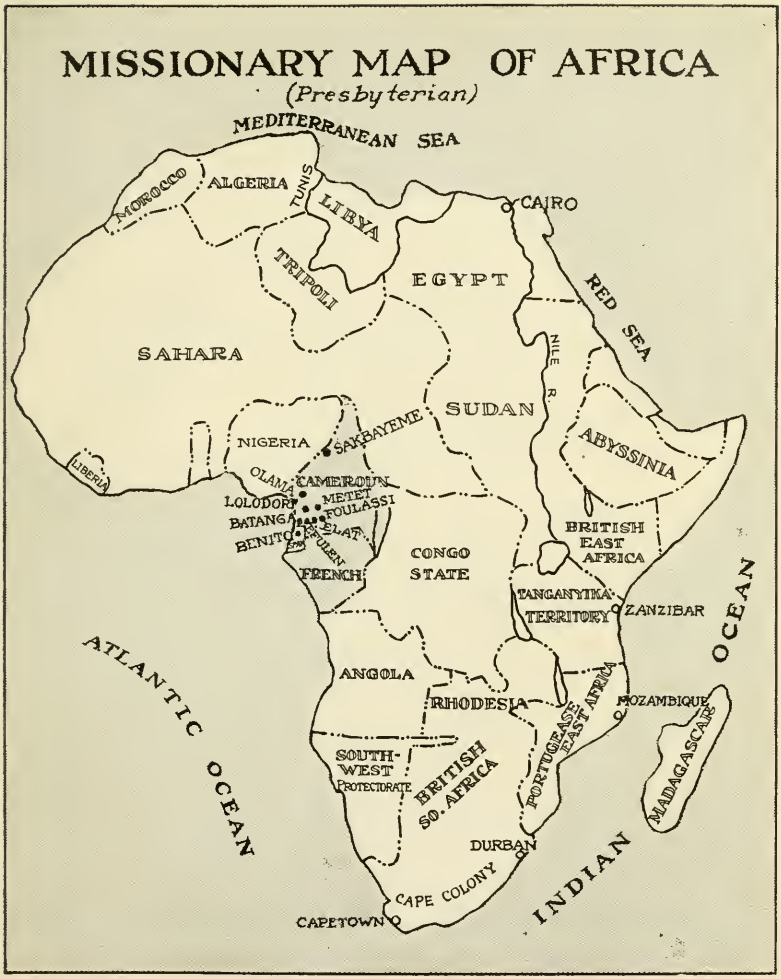
"I saw it,—the first rain of the rainy season."

"Did you not know that the first rain is the sign to close the vacation school and to return to the station school? Mr. Krug said to me, 'Return with Efa, close the school well, and bring back all the boys who begin to read the primer.' "

Mejo looked at his brother in astonishment.

"You speak the truth! The months of village school are now three months. But I had forgotten!"

"Do any of the boys begin to read in the primer?" asked Assam.



This map of Africa shows where the home of the Bulu people is. They live in the Cameroun, that part of the map which is shaded dark near the Gulf of Guinea.

Map of the Mission field reproduced by permission of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, in the U. S. A.

"Two tens of boys read in the book. Ten of them read the lesson about the cutlass, but the clever ten read about the elephant."

"A good real reading or a speaking by heart?"

"A good real reading—that begins in the middle if you choose."

"Fine!" said Assam. "I give thanks."

"Ah, Assam," said Asala.

"Speak!"

"I too am reading—I read about the elephant!"

"I have a great word for you," said Assam. "Mr. Krug was speaking with Efa. He told Efa that you must return with us to school, he promised Efa that the white woman would care for you day and night. He said that you would learn all the things of the black women that are good things,—farming and cooking and to keep a house. He said you would learn obedience, and to speak with a good mouth. And the word of God you would learn. Efa said, 'Well. Those were good things to learn.' He said that he would trust the white woman to keep you, because that woman is the wife of the doctor who healed him. So you return with us!"

"What shall I say!" said Asala, and her little brown face was astonished.

"Eh—my mother!" she whispered.

"Another thing Efa told Mr. Krūg. He said that he meant to give you away when you were no longer a child, but a girl to be married. He means to give you to his son Bekalli."

Asala turned her back upon her brothers and looked at the wall. They did not speak to her further. Mejo told Assam how Bekalli stole his house.

"What other deeds of hate has he done?"

"None."

"That is good," said Assam thoughtfully, looking at his little brother.

"Ah, Mejo, God has given you wisdom in these days to do His work well. What is your name now—Susi or Chuma or perhaps Livingstone?"

"Don't tease me," said Mejo. "And truly I had forgotten about the choosing of names!"

Three days later, those boys who had begun to read from the primer packed their little loads. From their mothers they begged food for the journey. From their fathers they begged

leave to go to the white man's school. The caravan gathered in Efa Nlem's town. Assam and Mejo sat in the palaver house beside their own loads, and the loads of goods that had been paid in for school tuition, and that must now be carried to the Mission station by the school boys.

At noon the little caravan moved away; twenty boys and a happy little girl followed the young teachers. There was a gay clamor and laughter, last good-bys were called and the voice of youth, set out upon the path of progress, died away in the forest.

"Besom b'akele hé!" sighed those women whose hearts had been touched by the Things of God. And Bilo'o said to them,—

"Some day we will beg Efa to let us make them a visit. Then we will cook them a present of food. And when we come to the white man's town, we will see the tribe of God gather under the great roof that is there."

So those who were left behind spoke together all day, and remembered the absent. But these, on the journey, spoke continually of the new things they were to see in school.

They slept that night in a new clearing where

a headman was building a town. In the street of this half-built town two great logs, the last of the débris of the forest, were still burning. The boys ranged themselves the length of this low fire. They set their kettles upon it here and there; they waited under the stars for their supper to cook. Asala was busy cooking for her brothers; they too sat beside the fire.

Suddenly from the dark about them a young man appeared; he sat down beside them. In the light of the fire Mejo saw with a great astonishment that it was Bekalli. And he looked at Assam.

"Bekalli, Mbolo," said Assam.

"Ah, Mbolo," said Bekalli.

"Are you going to the beach?" asked Assam after a pause.

"Not to the beach, but to school. I am walking in your caravan to school."

Assam said nothing, he looked embarrassed. Mejo noticed that, and so did Bekalli.

"Isn't it good?" he asked, quite humbly.

"It would be good," said Assam. "Certainly good—if you could read. But I fear for you with Mr. Krug when you tell him that you

cannot read. Then perhaps he will send you away, and you will feel shame and I will feel sorrow."

"I can read," said Bekalli, still humbly. "My little brothers taught me to read all the charts, and when I went too fast for them and wished to learn to read in a book, then Asala taught me."

"I hear, and it is good. Good for you and for us all."

Mejo said nothing and Assam said no more. Asala presently took her kettle off the fire; upon three clean squares torn off a green plantain leaf she put the smoking plantains that she had baked in the hot ashes. These she laid at the feet of the three boys. They dipped, each with his own wooden spoon, their supper of greens from the common kettle. She herself stood aside until they should finish, but Assam said to her,

"Eat, then."

And she dipped her little folded leaf with the others.

"Asala is a strange child," murmured Mejo to Assam, when they lay together upon a bed of the palaver house that night. "Don't you fear that she will be too proud?"

"I don't see it yet—she carries herself well. Don't hang your heart up about Asala, but watch your own walk."

"I hear," said Mejo.

"On the last day of that journey they met, at every forking of the way, other such caravans of eager youths. Obam they met, followed by seven dwarf boys, and carried by two dwarf men. From his hammock made of a blanket Obam told them that he had sprained his ankle.

"These Bulu boys," said the dwarf man who carried the foot of the hammock, "are wise in the things of books; many things of the things of God they teach us. But the day they follow the dwarf people up the face of a cliff they are as stupid as women. We said to Obam:

" 'Are you a dwarf that you should climb Nko'ovas? A teacher that breathes is better than a dead one!' "

"Even so, he tried to follow us, and from that day he taught his people from a bed. Everywhere we have gone in the forest we have carried him—as if he were an elephant's tusk of great weight and of great value!"

The dwarfs laughed and everybody laughed.

Obam put his head out of the hammock and laughed, looking at Assam.

"As I say," continued the dwarf. "And now we return our elephant's tusk to the rich man's town. We say to that great chief,—'Keep for us this treasure while we leave it here. And when we return in the dry season, give it to us again, that we may bear it to our own place!' "

"Akeva!" said Obam from his hammock.

Bekalli, from his place in the growing file of school boys, saw many of his own age among the strangers that came in from the many paths of the forest. Greetings were shouted from teacher to teacher, for these teachers were classmates of old. And presently these caravans, made up of little community groups, began to sing. Snaking along the trail that wound its way among the great trees, the long file of youths began to sing; and they moved to the rhythm of the air—

"Those people are as many as the sands
"They are many as the sands of the sea!"

"I understand," thought Bekalli to himself, "that they sing of the new tribe. And I begin to see that the people of the new tribe are many. It is well that I see this thing with my own eyes

—otherwise I could not know it. And a fine young man like myself must know these new things, he must know, that he may choose."

"One more stream to cross," shouted the teachers to the strangers, "then you will see the cassava gardens of the Mission."

And in the evening light the stream of school boys poured in to the clearing of the Mission station.

"They certainly say," thought Bekalli to himself, "that the new tribe is as abundant as rain. And I see for myself that in this place the many little streams gather to a great pool!"

The clearing was full of the bodies of school boys—old and new. The old boys were calling greetings to their friends. The new boys were turning their heads this way and that as their teachers said:

"That big house is the house of God."

"That big house is the upper school, and beyond is the lower school where you will enter."

"That fine house with the iron roof is the medicine house, where the doctor does the work of healing. Those houses beside it, like a little village, is the village of the sick people."

"That little village down that path with the fine houses all of plank, is the town of the carpenters and the blacksmiths and the wise ones who are taught to work with the hands."

"What a town!" thought Bekalli. "I am dead with wonder!" He felt his Bulu pride fall from him and he had a wish to run away from this place where his youth and beauty could not distinguish him.

Assam drew near to him. "You feel strange to-night," said Assam. "As I did one day many dry seasons back. I beg you to endure the strangeness and the loneliness. Ah, Bekalli," said Assam, "for the sake of your clan, and the day that you will be headman in the seat of your father—I beg you to endure! Like a cutlass that must be sharpened on a stone for a great work to be done, so I beg you to endure the hard things of school!"

"I hear," said Bekalli. "Akeva."

The beginning of a love for Assam was in his heart. And that night when he sat under the eaves of one of the ten great houses that were the boys' town, he remembered that word. About him in the clearing between the two rows of

houses, the hundreds of young bodies gesticulated. At one end of the village there was drumming and dancing. At the other end beside many little fires groups of boys were cooking their evening meal. A joyous clamor rose from this compound to the night sky.

Bekalli held in his hand a cutlass—the tool that had been given him by the headman of the tool house. And ten boys had been given him for a work-gang.

"To-morrow morning," he had been told, "when the drum calls to work, and before the time of school, you will go with many others to clear for a new garden. The white man is making a rubber plantation, and your gang goes to the clearing. This work that you do buys your food for the day. Every morning you work and that work buys your food. Every boy works."

"I understand," said Bekalli when he received his cutlass. But he did not altogether understand. "Why must I work like a woman?" he thought, and he remembered as he sat in the dusk, turning his cutlass over in his hand, the word of Assam.

"He said," thought Bekalli, "that I was like

a cutlass that must be sharpened for a great work. And the school is the grindstone. All these strange things of work are the grindstone. Assam himself has been ground on that stone. I agree that he is sharp and bright. His nickname is—'He stands like a dagger!' It remains for me to endure!" And Bekalli joined the little brothers of his clan about a kettle.

About a kettle in the palaver house of Akulu Mejo, Assam told the news to his own clan. Mejo sat near his father, who gave him a chicken leg from his own portion.

"Perhaps you are not to be stupid," said Akulu Mejo to Mejo. "This news of the school is great. You did that work well. These sons of mine who are Christians make me famous." And Akulu laughed.

"Go salute your mother in her house," he told Mejo.

There by the firelight Mejo found his mother and his sister. In the morning Asala must enter the girls' school, with the girls she must work in the garden, in the clean compound of the girls' town she must live under the eye of the white woman. She must cook with a new cleanliness

in the kettles of that town. She must wash her little belongings in the running stream, she must learn to sew, and all the afternoons she must learn the things of school under the thatch of the girls' school, with many tens of girls.

"I shall like it," she told her mother. "But to-night let me sleep by you on your bed!"

Presently the great army of the rain came trampling out of the forest. The sound of its passing in the night was an uproar. It raged upon the roofs of the girls' town and upon the roofs of the boys' town. On the many rough beds the tired bodies of little African adventurers came to rest. They fell asleep under the familiar tumult of the rain upon the roof. Lulled by that tumult Asala slept beside her mother. Mejo slept upon his own bed. Assam sitting by his table in the lantern light casting up his school accounts grew drowsy with the sound of rain. He put his books aside, and his eye fell upon the fly leaf of Mejo's Bible, still open at this legend,—

LIVINGSTONE MEJO AKULU

and below that written at another time,—

CHUMA MEJO AKULU

and written to-night in ink that was just dry,—

MEJO AKULU, TEACHER OF THE SCHOOL OF MEKOK.

Assam laughed. "What a strange boy!" he said, as he put out the light and laid his weary body down beside the weary body of his little brother. And he said,

"Mejo Akulu, teacher of schools,—I salute you!"

ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF THIS STORY

ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF THIS STORY

In reading this book you are reading about tribes, members of the African race that is called by the white man, Bantu. There are many tribes of the Bantu people. They live in Central and Southern Africa. Some parts of that country are forest, some are open country. The open country is called by the white man the grass country. The Bulu tribe is living in the forest country about two hundred miles north of the equator and near the west coast. The customs of the Bulu are like the customs of other Bantu people who have not been a long time in contact with the white man. They have no knowledge of the world outside the forest; of their own country they know only their own neighborhood. They travel on foot by little trails from settlement to settlement. They have no written language, but they have a good language to speak. The men are good hunters and fishers, and good builders of towns. The towns of the Bulu are built as you will read in this story, but other tribes of the Bantu build with different material,—some with grass, some with clay and wattles. The Bulu make their furniture of wood. I have told about their furniture in the story. The palaver house in a Bulu town is a big house at the end of the street where the real men of the village sit and smoke and talk and eat. Guests are received there and all matters of general interest are discussed there.

The women are the farmers. They plant bananas and plantains, many kinds of yams, peanuts, corn, cassava, savory herbs that we white people do not have, and other

foods that we do not have. There are wild fruits in the forest, some nuts and other fruits. But there is no complete diet growing wild in Africa; the people must plant to eat.

The Bantu tell time by the sun for the day, the moon for the month, the stars for the season. They do not speak of years; they speak of rainy seasons and dry seasons, and they count time by their plantings,—especially among the Bulu, the planting of peanuts.

News is spread by travelers, and in another way—it is announced by drums. Upon wooden drums a good drummer will beat out a message that sounds like the clicking of a telegraph machine. But that clicking is very loud; it can be heard miles away. Our call drum at Efulen mission station could be understood seventeen miles away. Almost any news can be told by the call drum, and every grown person has a drum name by which he may be called from a distance.

All Bulu women and nearly all the women of the primitive Bantu tribes are bought and sold. A little girl is sold by her father or her elder brother. The man who buys her puts her with some older woman of his town, who will keep the girl until she is marriageable. A Christian man does not sell his daughter or his sister before she is marriageable, or against her will, or to a man with other wives.

In spite of the fact that little girls are sold and sent away from home, there is a strong family love and loyalty among the Bantu. And there is a strong bond among the members of the clan, and the townspeople. The native dress of Bulu men is made of the bark of trees, beaten into a sort of cloth. Women wear aprons of leaves and a kind of thick tail of dried grasses. They still tattoo their bodies, they still wear necklaces of the coarse hair of the elephant's tail, or neck-

laces strung with dog's teeth, or the teeth of leopards. They wear bracelets of brass and ivory. The men carry spears tipped with brass or with iron. But there are many things now in the forest that are manufactured by the white man. Calico and beads and umbrellas and hats and many more things of the white man may be bought of the black traders who are trading through the forest.

Certain African tribes have great headmen with power over many people. As you read the life stories of Livingstone, Moffat, Mackay, Coillard, and other missionaries, you will learn the names of some of these great chiefs. Among the Bulu, however, the headmen are simple folk, with power over their own townspeople, and with just a local fame. In their own neighborhoods, however, they are obeyed and respected. They are the governors of their neighborhoods.

The Bulu, like other Bantu tribes, believe that God, the Creator, has forgotten them. So they have made up a system of religion of their own. They are sure that many evil spirits are present in the world to do harm, and that the spirits of their dead ancestors may be induced to protect them. To keep off the evil spirits they make charms and rules of conduct. To make friends of friendly spirits they make other charms and other rules; and to induce the ancestor spirits to guard the town and the interests of the clan, they make little offerings and little prayers to the wooden images that are the little habitations of the ancestor spirits. Certain men of the tribe make a specialty of magic; they are the witch doctors and have great power, especially as every death is thought to be the evil work of magic. Headmen must always practice a certain amount of magic for the good of the town. Trial by poison is a common way, devised by witch doctors, to find out who has given the "witch"

to the sick person. If the person who drinks the poison gets dizzy and falls down—then he is guilty, and those people who are present kill him. The Bulu people attach a great importance to the killing effects of a prick by a leopard's whisker. Some of them think there is magic in such an injury, but our mission doctors begin to believe that wicked men dip the whisker in a poison that they make, and with the poisoned whisker prick their enemies.

The Dwarfs or Pygmies are a race of African people smaller than the men of other known races. Their average height is four feet seven. They are dwellers in the forest—hunters and wanderers. They do not build towns as other African tribes do, nor plant gardens. They often attach themselves to superior tribes and wander about in their neighborhood. They are very shy and timid. The great African explorer, Paul Du Chaillu, has written about his encounters with them; Stanley and other white men have written about them. I have visited the clearing where the little dwarf headman Be had built some leafy shelters. He himself showed me the trail to that clearing. It was as I tell you in this story.

School boys, you will notice in this story, are respected; and their wisdom is admired. This is very generally true in the neighborhood of the great mission schools. The school boy is New Africa. His elders look to him for light on modern problems. He is distinguished, not only by his little accumulation of knowledge, but also by the little pack of possessions that he has been everywhere ambitious to acquire, and by his new custom that is not just like the old town custom. Often he is proud and overbearing, but often he is such a boy as I have tried to show you in Assam.

I assure you that I have not idealized, in Assam and his school, the best type of school and the best type of teacher.

Every established Africa Mission can show the equal of these. Neither have I exaggerated, in the story of Asala, the influence of a little Christian girl in a forest community. Mejo is just such a boy as is common in our schools—many a boy of his age and type has had to bear heavy responsibilities. In the account of every missionary's experience there is record of boys and of girls who have distinguished themselves. It is fine to read in the life of Mackay of Uganda about Sembera, the first Christian among the Baganda. It is sad but very thrilling to read of those young Baganda boys, who were martyred for their faith on January 30, 1882. In our own mission we must always remember a young lad who was killed by black soldiers because he would not deliver to them the mission mail bag. Another young lad of our mission kept for us in hiding a treasure of nearly one thousand dollars, and faithfully returned every piece of silver money when the danger of robbers was past. Girls, too, have been brave and faithful. Read, if you can, about the bravery of a little maid servant, on page 125 of the book by John Mackenzie called Ten Years North of the Orange River. There are more of such stories than I can mention; you must be looking for them yourselves.

I would like to say about the narrative of Livingstone's life as recounted by Assam, that no boy, black or white, could keep so long a story in his head. But an African can keep very long tales in his head. He is always glad to illustrate his tale as Assam did, by a diagram upon the ground. The story of Livingstone, as told in this book, is told as if it were translated from the Bulu language, and the comments upon it are just such comments as I have heard a thousand times upon one and another account of the things of the white man.

No one who wishes to know Livingstone must be satisfied with this little account. Poor black men and women, sitting by the palaver house fire,—what could they know of the great adventures and the great heart of that great Christian Adventurer. It is for white people to know and to admire this hero of their race. All that treasure of heroism that is stored in the great books by Livingstone and about Livingstone are the inheritance of the tribes of the white man. Other such treasure there is in the lives of Robert and Mary Moffat, Mackay the white man of Works, Hannington the lion hearted, and Mary Slessor of Old Calabar.

THE END